

JWC 105A: Judaism as a Faith and a Civilization  
Monday/Wednesday/Thursday  
Time: 16:00–17:00

Instructor: Ari Rudolph  
Email: arirudolph@yahoo.com  
Phone: 054-765-4234

### AJU Mission Statement

**Learning and Scholarship:** We believe in the principle of Torah – learning as an intellectual and inspirational endeavor – that embraces both academic scholarship and the efforts of all Jews to explore their shared heritage through the formal and informal study of Judaism and the other great civilizations of the world.

**Culture:** We acknowledge that Judaism is a flourishing civilization with a culture that is fundamental to modern Jewish identity. We strive to advance that culture by encouraging artistic endeavor in all of its many forms.

**Ethics:** We recognize that ethics is the language of Judaism and its most important link to the world at large.

**Leadership:** We understand that the future of Jewish life depends on the careful preparation of dedicated and impassioned individuals who are called to leadership.

**Peoplehood:** We are a pluralistic institution that embraces diversity within Judaism and values the contributions of all groups to the growth of Jewish Civilization.

### Students with Disabilities

American Jewish University is committed to assisting our students with documented disabilities to have a successful career at AJU. Contact the Office of Student Affairs to request accommodations and begin the documentation process. (See Enhancing Accessibility and/or AJU website for complete policy.)

### Standards of Academic Integrity

The Honor Code of American Jewish University was written by a committee of undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and administrators. Under the Honor Code, students have a two-fold obligation: individually, they must not violate the code, and as a community, they are responsible to see that suspected violations are reported. Academic Dishonesty includes, but is not limited, to the following definitions:

**A. Examination Behavior:** Unless expressly permitted by the instructor, the use of external assistance during an exam shall be considered academically dishonest. Inappropriate exam behavior includes but is not limited to: (1) communicating with anyone in any way during an exam, (2) copying material from another student's exam, (3) allowing a student to copy from one's exam, (4) using unauthorized notes, calculators, or other sources of unauthorized assistance.

**B. Fabrication:** Any intentional falsification, invention of data, or citation in an academic exercise will be considered to be academic dishonesty. Fabrication involves but is not limited to: (1) inventing or altering data for a laboratory experiment or

field project, (2) padding a bibliography of a term paper or research paper with sources one did not utilize, (3) resubmitting returned and corrected academic work under the pretense of grader evaluation error when, in fact, the work has been altered from its original form.

**C. Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the appropriation and subsequent passing off of another's ideas or words as one's own. If the words or ideas of another are used, acknowledgement of the original source must be made through recognized referencing practices. Use of another's ideas or words must be properly acknowledged as follows:

- (1) Direct Quotation: Any use of direct quotation must be acknowledged by footnote citation and by either quotation marks or proper indentation and spacing.
- (2) Paraphrase: If another's ideas are borrowed in whole or in part and are merely recast in the student's own words, proper acknowledgement must, nonetheless, be made. A footnote or proper internal citation must follow the paraphrased material.

**D. Other Types of Academic Dishonesty:** Other forms of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Submitting a paper written by or obtained from another person.
- (2) Using a paper or essay in more than one class without the instructors' expressed permission.
- (3) Obtaining a copy of an examination in advance without the knowledge and consent of the instructor.
- (4) Altering academic records outside of official institutional procedures.
- (5) Using another person to complete academic assignments such as homework, take-home exams or using another person posing as oneself to take classroom examinations.

**Attendance is mandatory for all class sessions. Should a student miss 20% or more of class sessions, he/she will be automatically withdrawn from the course and receive a W. To get an excused absence one must be ill and bring a doctor's note.**

An introduction to the history and traditions of classical Judaism, examining the continuities and changes in Jewish society, institutions, concepts and traditions through the ages. A survey of the theological and institutional structures of Judaism as they developed through history. Judaism will be portrayed in all of its facets: historical, national, literary, theological and cultural.

Requirements: in class exams and writing assignments, and a final project.

[Recommended texts: Milton Steinberg, *As A Driven Leaf*; James Michener, *The Source*]

**Students are required to bring their course reader to every class session.**

**Evaluation:** Midterm exam, 30%; Final Exam, 30%; Cumulative Essay, 20%; attendance and class participation, 20%.

## UNITS

### **1: What is Judaism? The Structure of Jewish History**

#### *Readings:*

In class: Exodus 19:2 – 24:14 from the *Torah*

Excerpts from Clifford Geertz: “Religion as a Cultural System” and “Ethos, World View, and the Analysis of Sacred Symbols”

Jonathan Sacks, "Is There Still a Jewish People?" from *Future Tense*

#### *Recommended:*

Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture” (pp. 5-15)

### **2: The Destruction of the Country and the Second Temple Period**

#### *Readings:*

Robert Goldenberg, “Law and Spirit in Talmudic Religion,” from *Jewish Spirituality from the Bible through the Middle Ages*, ed. Arthur Green.

Excerpt from Talmud Bava Metzia: 59a-b: The Bet Midrash and Divine Law

Jacob Neusner, “Varieties of Judaism in the Formative Period,” from *Jewish Spirituality from the Bible through the Middle Ages*, ed. Arthur Green.

#### *Recommended:*

Milton Steinberg, *As a Driven Leaf*.

### **3: The Talmud and Jewish Values: Lashon Ha’ra, Ona’at Devarim, and Geneivat Da’at**

#### *Readings:*

“Lashon Ha’ra and Ona’at Devarim,” Talmudic and Halachic texts

Rabbi Bradley Artson, *Gift of Soul, Gift of Wisdom*, chapter 7.

Robert Goldenberg, "Talmud" from Bary Holtz, ed. *Back to the Sources*

### **4: Midrash**

#### *Readings:*

Simi Peters, *Learning to Read Midrash*

Hebrew Bible: Genesis chapters 1-2

Midrash Rabbah Genesis: Selections

*In Class:*

Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, excerpt.

*Recommended:*

David Stern, "Midrash and Indeterminacy" from *Critical Inquiry* Autumn 1988

Avivah Zornberg, *Genesis: The Beginning of Desire*, excerpt

Gerald Bruns, "Midrash and Allegory" from *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, Robert Alter, ed.

## **5: The Origins of Christianity**

*Readings:*

Assigned: 4 Gospels

Christian New Testament: Mark, chs. 1-14; Matthew, Sermon on the Mount; Paul, *Romans*, chs. 6-9.

Louis Feldman, "Palestinian and Diaspora Judaism in the First Century" from *Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism*, ed. Hershel Shanks

E. P. Sanders, "The Life of Jesus" from *Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism*, ed. Hershel Shanks

## **6: The Medieval Period and Kabbalah**

*Readings:*

Daniel Matt, Introduction from *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*

Aryeh Kaplan *Innerspace*

Gershom Scholem, "The Meaning of the Torah in Jewish Mysticism," from *On the Kabbalah and its Symbolism* (Schocken, 1965)

## **7. The Rise of Hasidism**

Lis Harris, *Holy Days*.

## **8. The Enlightenment**

"The Jewish Question": The *Judenfrage*, Emancipation, Ethical Monotheism, and the Beginnings of Modern Judaism

*Readings:*

Bruno Bauer, "The Jewish Problem"

Frederick William III, "Emancipation [Proclamation] in Prussia (March 11, 1812)"

Eliezer Liebermann, "The Light of Splendor"

"The Reform Rabbinical Conference at Brunswick: The Question of Patriotism"

"The Reform Rabbinical Conference at Frankfurt: Hebrew as the Language of Jewish Prayer; The Question of Messianism"

Conference of Reform Rabbis, "The Pittsburgh Platform (1883)"

*Recommended:*

Count, Molé, “Napoleon’s Instructions to the Assembly of Jewish Notables (July 29, 1806)”

Kaufmann Kohler, “The Concordance of Judaism and Americanism”

## **9. Judaism in America**

*Readings:*

Israel Friedlaender, “The Division Between German and Russian Jews”

Congressional Committee on Immigration, “Temporary Suspension of Immigration (1920)”

Isaac Deutscher, “The Non-Jewish Jew”

## **10: Hasidism in America: Eli the Fanatic**

Philip Roth, “Eli the Fanatic”

Hayim Soloveitchik, “Rupture and Reconstruction: The Transformation of American Orthodoxy” (*Tradition* 28:4, 1994)

## **11. 20<sup>th</sup> Century Jewish Thought, Part 1**

Abraham Joshua Heschel, selections from *Man is Not Alone, God in Search of Man, The Sabbath*

Joseph Soloveitchik, *The Lonely Man of Faith*

## **12. 20<sup>th</sup> Century Jewish Thought, Part 2**

Arnold Eisen, *The Chosen People in America*

Emil Fackenheim, *The Jewish Thought of Emil Fackenheim*

## **13. Jewish Women’s Identity: Stereotype, Silence, & Power**

Judith Plaskow, in Susannah Heschel, ed. *On Being a Jewish Feminist*

Marcia Falk, “Notes on Composing New Blessings: Toward a Feminist-Jewish Reconstruction of Prayer”

## **14: Israel: Its Origins and Today, Part 1**

Ahad Ha’am, Theodore Herzl: selections

## **15: Israel: Its Origins and Today, Part 2**

Rav Kook, Benny Lau: selections