

The University of Western Ontario
History 2809E: Jewish History and Culture to 1492
Fall 2013/Winter 2014
Social Science 3024
Tuesdays, 2:30-5:30 PM

Instructor: Daniel Rosenthal
Office: TBA
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12:30-2:30 & by appointment

This full-year course is a survey of Jewish history from antiquity to the Expulsion from Spain in 1492. Particular attention will be paid to the development and diversity of Jewish cultures and thought across the Mediterranean and throughout Europe, the creation of Jewish canonical texts, the transformation of community authority, and the rise of anti-Jewish hatred. Substantial time will also be devoted to the study of how gender and women played a role in shaping the Jewish religion and Jewish history.

This course also examines the varied relationships between Jewish communities and the societies that surrounded them, particularly after the creation of diaspora communities after 586 B.C.E. We will analyze how trends within Jewish societies influenced and were influenced by the wider world. While under the rule of Babylonian, Hellenistic, Islamic, and Christian cultures Jews both adopted customs of the surrounding communities and strove to retain distinctive practices and identities.

Another key portion of the course will be the origins and perpetration of anti-Jewish hatred, an integral factor in the understanding of the interactions between Jews and the surrounding majority populations. In Europe, the myth of Jews as Christ-killers led to a particularly virulent form of anti-Judaism, the forerunner to modern antisemitism. In Muslim-dominated regions, conversely, Jews were never afforded equal status, but there existed a long tradition of peaceful coexistence.

Wherever they lived, Jews came to fill distinctive economic niches, ones that often reflected the high degree of literacy in Jewish communities, the links that bound Jews across communal and political borders, and the frequent exclusion of Jews from many parts of everyday life. These economic roles further contributed to Jewish distinctiveness and provided fodder for anti-Jewish ideology.

Class Meeting Structure

Each class meeting will be divided into a lecture and a seminar with a short break in between. The lectures will focus on the “broad picture” and will provide context for our topics of study. The seminar portion of each meeting will focus on select primary and secondary sources. Students are expected to be able to take part in a discussion on the significance of these texts.

Course Objectives:

-Learn the narrative scope of Jewish history and the roots of contemporary Judaism

- Understand how the idea of a Jewish people emerged and how it changed over time
- Understand how identities form along national, ethnic, and religious lines
- Develop a good working knowledge of the geography and aspects of the historiography related to the course
- Develop effective written and oral communication skills

Grading Rubric:

Short Analysis I (3-4 pages)	Due: Oct. 1	5%
Short Analysis II (3-4 pages)	Due: Oct. 22	5%
Short Analysis III (3-4 pages)	Due: Nov. 12	5%
Short Analysis IV (3-4 pages)	Due: Jan. 14	5%
Research Essay (8-10 pages)	Due: March 18	25%
Midterm Exam	Nov. 26th	10%
Final Exam	Exam period	25%
Class Participation		20%

The Midterm exam will be held in class the second to last week of the first term. The Final exam will be held during the exam period in April.

The written assignments are designed to help students hone their writing and analytical skills. These assignments also provide students with the opportunity to study specific aspects of Judaism and the Jewish experience.

Topics for the analyses will be posted online at least three weeks in advance of the due date. Suggested topics for the research essay will be posted the first day of class in January. Students may choose their own topics, but these must be approved in advance.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Required Texts (Available at the campus book store and on reserve in the library):

The Jews, edited by John Efron

The Jew in the Medieval World: A Sourcebook, 315-1791, edited by Jacob Rader Marcus

Texts and Traditions: A Source Reader for the Study of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism, edited by Lawrence Schiffman

Also suggested is a good English translation of the Old Testament. I recommend *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures* (JPS Edition).

Class Meetings and Reading Assignments

Readings marked with an asterisk(*) will be accessible through OWL. Through OWL's online classroom you will find all handouts, supplementary readings, updates and announcements. It is your responsibility to check the class site regularly.

1 - Sept. 10

Intro, Pre-Israelite Origins

Efron: 1-10

*Selections from the *Epic of Gilgamesh*

2 - Sept. 17

The Bible and Jewish History

Efron: 10-18, 30-48

Schiffman: 1-47

*Selection from *Understanding Genesis*, Nahum Sarna

3 - Sept. 24

The United Kingdom Period and the First Temple Period

Schiffman: 47-64, 106-109

*From the Old Testament: II Samuel 5-7, 11-12, I Kings 3-6, 8, 10-12, 17-19, Isaiah 6, 36-39; Hosea 1-3; Amos 1-2

4 - Oct. 1, *First Analysis Due*

The Destruction of the Temple and the Babylonian Diaspora

Efron: 18-30

Schiffman: 65-105, 109-120

*From the Old Testament: Book of Esther

5 - Oct. 8

Greek Rule and the Influence of Hellenism

Efron: 49-62

Schiffman: 121-169

*TBA

6 - Oct. 15

The Hasmonean Monarchy

Schiffman: 231-266

*TBD

7 - Oct. 22, *Second Analysis Due*

Sects of Judaism and Roman Control

Efron: 62-69
Schiffman: 186-192, 266-300, 354-368
***TBA**

8 - Oct. 29
Herodian Rule and the Jewish Wars
Efron: 70-82
Schiffman: 372-407, 429-472, 479-494
*Selection from *The Masada Myth*, Nachman Ben-Yehuda

9 - Nov. 5
The Emergence of Christianity
Efron: 82-88
Schiffman: 407-427
***New Testament Selections TBD**

10 - Nov. 12, *Third Analysis Due*
The Rise of Rabbinic Judaism and the Creation of the Mishna
Efron: 89-104
Schiffman: 472-479, 503-547, 682-703
* "Babylonian Rabbinic Culture", Isaiah Gafni

11 - Nov. 19
Jews under a Christianized Roman Empire
Schiffman: 565-595
Marcus: 1-2, 19-22 (Numbers refer to those given to each primary source text)
*Selections from John Chrysostom and St. Augustine

12 - Nov. 26
Midterm

13 - Dec. 3rd
The Talmud and the Rise of the Babylonian Diaspora's Authority
Efron: 104-115
Schiffman: 603-638
*Selection from *The Invention of the Jewish People*, Shlomo Sand

14 - Jan. 7
Jews under the Crescent
Efron: 116-122
Marcus: 3(I)
* "Jewish Culture in the Formative Period of Islam", Reuven Firestone

15 - Jan. 14, *Fourth Analysis Due*
Bagdad, Geonim, and the Karaite Schism; The Khazar Empire
Efron: 122-127, 166-67

Schiffman: 749-761

Marcus: 38, 46-47, 57

*Selection from *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland*, Simon Dubnow

16 - Jan 21

Jews under Christian Rule after the Fall of Rome through the First Crusade

Efron: 127-136

Marcus: 4, 72

* "The Status of the Jews in Roman Legislation: The Reign of Justinian 527-565 CE", Catherine Brewer

* "The Legal Status of Spanish Jews during the Visigothic Catholic Era: From Reccared (586) to Reccesswinth (672)", Alfredo Mordechai Rabelo

17 - Jan 28

The Golden Age of Spain?

Efron: 136-148

Marcus: 59

*Selections from the poetry of Yehuda Ha-Levi

*Selections from *Communities of Violence*, David Nirenberg

18 - Feb. 4

Maimonides/Foundations of Kabbalah

Efron: TBA

Marcus: 48-50, 62, 74-75, 77

* "Maimonides", *American Jewish Yearbook*

19 - Feb. 11

Medieval Anti-Jewish Hatred: Crusades, Blood Libel, Jewish Status, and the Fourth Lateran Council

Efron: 148-157

Marcus: 9, 23-28, 30-31, 76(I)

20 - Feb. 18

No Class: Reading Week

21 - Feb. 25

Expulsions/Disputations

Efron 160-164

Marcus: 5-6, 8, 14, 16, 29

***TBA**

22 - March 4

The Jewish Community of the Rhine, Rashi, and The Pietists of Ashkenaz

Efron: 164-173

Marcus: 60-61

***TBD**

23 - March 11

Jewish Society: Prayer, the Lifecycle, Gender Relations

Efron: 174-178

Marcus: 63, 77-81

*Selection from *Engendering Judaism*, Rachel Adler

24 - March 18, *Research Essay Due*

Christian Spain and the Problem of Conversos

Efron: 157-160

Marcus: 7, 10

*TBA

25 - March 25

The Spanish Inquisition and 1492

Efron: 179-183

Marcus: 11-12

*Intro to *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto*, Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi

26 - April 1

Consequences of the Expulsion

Efron: 183-203

*Selection from *Mercantilism and the Jews*, Jonathan Israel

27 - April 8

Jewish Historiography and Wrap-up

*TBD

COURSE POLICIES

Extensions

Extensions will be granted only in exceptional cases of illness or family emergencies and never for academic reasons. It will be necessary to submit valid documentation relating to the emergency. Late papers without extensions will be marked down 3% per day.

In the event of illness, you should contact Academic Counselling as soon as possible. The Academic Counsellors will determine, in consultation with the student, whether or not accommodation is warranted. They will subsequently contact the instructors in the relevant courses about the accommodation.

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact, Rebecca Dashford, Undergraduate Program Advisor, Department of History, 519-661-2111 x84962 or rdashfo@uwo.ca.

Plagiarism

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see Scholastic Offense Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

SUPPORT SERVICES

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

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The following rules pertain to the acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.

A. In using another writer's words, you must both place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge that the words are those of another writer.

You are plagiarizing if you use a sequence of words, a sentence or a paragraph taken from other writers without acknowledging them to be theirs. Acknowledgement is indicated either by (1) mentioning the author and work from which the words are borrowed in the text of your paper; or by (2) placing a footnote number at the end of the quotation in your text, and including a correspondingly numbered footnote at the bottom of the page (or in a separate reference section at the end of your essay). This footnote should indicate author, title of the work, place and date of Publication and page number. Method (2) given above is usually preferable for academic essays because it provides the reader with more information about

your sources and leaves your text uncluttered with parenthetical and tangential references. In either case words taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks or set off from your text by single spacing and indentation in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for your own words. Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.

B. In adopting other writer's ideas, you must acknowledge that they are theirs.

You are plagiarizing if you adopt, summarize, or paraphrase other writers' trains of argument, ideas or sequences of ideas without acknowledging their authorship according to the method of acknowledgement given in 'A' above. Since the words are your own, they need not be enclosed in quotation marks. Be certain, however, that the words you use are entirely your own; where you must use words or phrases from your source; these should be enclosed in quotation marks, as in 'A' above.

Clearly, it is possible for you to formulate arguments or ideas independently of another writer who has expounded the same ideas, and whom you have not read. Where you got your ideas is the important consideration here. Do not be afraid to present an argument or idea without acknowledgement to another writer, if you have arrived at it entirely independently. Acknowledge it if you have derived it from a source outside your own thinking on the subject.

In short, use of acknowledgements and, when necessary, quotation marks is necessary to distinguish clearly between what is yours and what is not. Since the rules have been explained to you, if you fail to make this distinction, your instructor very likely will do so for you, and they will be forced to regard your omission as intentional literary theft. Plagiarism is a serious offence which may result in a student's receiving an 'F' in a course or, in extreme cases, in their suspension from the University.

MEDICAL ACCOMMODATION

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Please go to https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/medical_accommodations_link_for_OOR.pdf to read about the University's policy on medical accommodation. Please go to <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medicalform.pdf> to download the necessary form. In the event of illness, you should contact Academic Counselling as soon as possible. The Academic Counsellors will determine, in consultation with the student, whether or not accommodation is warranted. They will subsequently contact the instructors in the relevant courses about the accommodation. Once a decision has been made about accommodation, the student should contact his/her instructors to determine a new due date for term tests, assignments, and exams.

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