HISTORY HIST 3808G
Jewish Life in North America Since 1880
Fall/Winter 2022-23
Thursday, 1:30pm-3:30pm, Location TBA
in-person

Instructor: Monda Halpern, Professor
Office Hours: Thursday, 3:30pm-5:00pm
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This is a draft syllabus. Please see your course OWL site for the final syllabus.

Course delivery with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic
The intent is for this course to be delivered in-person but should the COVID-19 landscape shift, the course will be delivered on-line synchronously (i.e. on Zoom at the times indicated in the timetable. The grading scheme will not change. The course will return to an in-person mode of delivery when the University and local health authorities deem it safe to do so.

Course Description:
This course examines the history of Jews in the United States and Canada, highlighting their changing family, spiritual, social, and work lives, exploring themes of identity, assimilation, activism, and upward mobility, and considering how Jews have helped shape North American life through their struggles and achievements.

Prerequisite(s):
1.0 History course at the 2200 level or above.

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Syllabus:

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Between 1880 and 1920, over two million Eastern European Jews left their homelands to begin new lives in the United States and Canada. This seminar course will examine these Jewish immigrants and the generations which followed, highlighting their changing family, spiritual, social, and work lives, and
both their struggles and achievements. In so doing, the course will explore a variety of themes related to ethnicity, religion, gender, and class, including cultural identity, assimilation, social activism, and upward mobility. These topics and themes will help elucidate how Jews have helped shape North American life by both conforming to and rebelling against its dominant culture.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Research essay (12-15 pages): TBA 45%
Critiques (2 critiques at 2 pages each): TBA 30%
Seminar presentation: TBA 15%
Participation/Attendance: 10%

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Students should be able to:

1. explain the central priorities, struggles, and achievements of successive Jewish generations, and the ways in which these concerns and experiences influenced, and were shaped by, various historical trends and movements.

2. explain the ways in which ethnic and religious identity intersects with issues of gender and class, and the ways in which it can change over time and across generations.

3. explain both the formal and informal ways in which Jews have conformed to and challenged the dominant culture, as well as their own traditions.

**SEMINAR PRESENTATION:**

You will sign up for a presentation date beginning in Week 5. On your selected date, you (possibly along with one other) will present one of the scheduled articles. In your presentation, address and critique your article’s thesis, main arguments, biases, and sources, and situate your article in the larger historiography. As well, discuss your related essay topic in the context of your reading. Stimulate class discussion by asking questions and fielding comments. Feel free to incorporate audio-visual aids. You will be graded on the content of your presentation, and on your facilitation of the seminar discussion. As you may be “sharing” your presentation date with a classmate, and in order to prevent overlap in discussion topics, arrange with them which topics/readings that each one of you will present. Your presentation will last 20-30 minutes.

To facilitate the research of your essay, the subject of your essay will coincide with the general seminar topic of your selected presentation date. **Your essay (in both paper and electronic format) will be due on that same day in class.** As your classmates are relying on the timely submission of your essay in order to write their critiques (see below), essays MUST be submitted on your assigned due date.
Late research essays will generally not be accepted for grading. If you are facing difficulties, please talk to me.

ESSAY:

Your essay should be 12-15 pages. It must include a thesis statement that advances a clear argument and maps the discussion points of the paper. In addition to offering a meaningful examination, your essay must include an introduction, conclusion, endnotes or footnotes, and a bibliography. Endnotes/footnotes should be in a correct and consistent format. The bibliography should include 12-15 sources, 2/3 of which should be secondary sources (contemporary sources, mostly books, written by scholars) and 1/3 of which should be primary sources (written/spoken by observers during the time period under study). Primary sources can be books, articles, government documents, newspapers, etc., but they must be a stand-alone source/document, not simply an excerpt or quotation retrieved from a secondary source; in other words, you must locate your own primary sources (on the internet (on a credible site) or in a library or archive).

CRITIQUES:

Those students not presenting an article and submitting an essay on a given week will be required to do the assigned readings, participate in the seminar discussion, and write an essay critique. Select two student essays (which will be accessible on OWL) on which you would like to write a critique. Your critique is due in class and must be submitted no later than one week following the submission of the essay about which it is written. Submitted critiques will not be seen by anyone other than me; they will be returned with a mark as soon as possible. Critiques should be two typed pages and double-spaced. They should include a concise thesis statement stating the strengths and weaknesses of the essay; they should then discuss those strengths and weaknesses. They should also have an introduction and conclusion, but they do not require extra research or citations. When submitting your critique, please indicate if it is critique 1 or 2.

[enter in a description of the objectives and content of the course, which shall include a statement of what is expected of the student by way of preparation, tests, exercises, essays, laboratory reports, etc., and any specific requirements for attendance and participation. If you have multiple subheadings for this section, use the Heading #3 formatting for your subheadings]

Course Materials:

See the linked and posted articles cited below.

For online primary sources, see the Weldon database Jewish Life in America, 1654-1954

Methods of Evaluation:

Students must attend at least half the number of full classes in order to qualify for a passing final grade, regardless of marks received for other assignments.
Course Schedule and Readings:

**JANUARY 12** – Introduction, part 1: Principles of Judaism

**JANUARY 19** – Introduction, part 2: From Europe to North America

**JANUARY 26** – “Sensing” North American City Life


http://mj.oxfordjournals.org.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/content/29/2/167.full.pdf+html

**FEBRUARY 2** – Labour and Union Activism

Daniel Bender, "A Hero... for the Weak": Work, Consumption, and the Enfeebled Jewish Worker, 1881-1924,” *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 56 (Fall 1999): 1-22


**FEBRUARY 9** – Assimilation Projects and Alternatives to Orthodoxy (WEEK 5)


**FEBRUARY 16 – Upward Mobility and Institution-Building**


**FEBRUARY 23 – NO CLASS (SPRING READING WEEK)**

**MARCH 2 – Family Trouble**


http://www.jstor.org/stable/27500526


**MARCH 9 – Antisemitism in the 1920s and 30s**


**POSTED**


MARCH 16 – Responses to the Holocaust

Irving Abella and Harold Troper, “‘The line must be drawn somewhere': Canada and Jewish Refugees, 1933-1939,” in *A Nation of Immigrants: Women, Workers, and Communities in Canadian History, 1840s-1960s*. Edited by Franca Iacovetta, et al. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998)

POSTED


POSTED


MARCH 23 – Stagnation and Transformation in the 1950s and 1960s


POSTED
MARCH 30 – Images in Popular Culture


http://wjudaism.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/wjudaism/article/view/22533

APRIL 6 – NO CLASS MEETING (PASSOVER)

Work in lieu of this meeting will be assigned in advance.

END OF TERM

Use of Electronic Devices:
During all class lectures, discussions, and presentations, the recreational use of lap-tops (web browsing, emailing, etc.), as well as the use of all wireless handheld devices, is discouraged and could adversely affect your participation mark.

Additional Statements:
Please review the Department of History Course Must-Knows document,
https://www.history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/Docs/Department%20of%20History%20Course%20Must-Knows.pdf, for additional information regarding:

- Academic Offences
- Accessibility Options
- Medical Issues
- Plagiarism
- Scholastic Offences
- Copyright
- Health and Wellness