Jewish Studies

Program of Study

The BA program in Jewish Studies provides a context in which College students may examine the texts, cultures, languages, and histories of Jews and Judaism over three millennia. The perspective is contextual, comparative, and interdisciplinary. The long and diverse history of Jews and Judaism affords unique opportunities to study modes of continuity and change, interpretation and innovation, and isolation and integration of a world historical civilization. Students are encouraged to develop appropriate skills (in texts, languages, history, and culture) for independent work.

Students in other fields of study may also complete a minor in Jewish Studies. Information follows the description of the major.

Jewish Civilization Sequence

A two-course Jewish Civilization sequence is offered in the Autumn and Winter Quarters. The first course begins in antiquity and extends to the early medieval period (JWSC 12000 Jewish Civilization I: Ancient Beginnings to Early Medieval Period). The second course begins in the medieval period and extends to the present (JWSC 12001 Jewish Civilization II: Late Medieval to Modern Period). Jewish civilization courses may be used to fulfill the College’s general education requirement in civilization studies. It is recommended, though not required, that students take these two courses in sequence. Students who register for the Autumn Quarter course will automatically be pre-registered for the winter segment.

Note: Jewish Studies revised its civilization studies courses starting in academic year 2018–19. Students who began the requirement prior to Autumn Quarter 2018, under the previous course options, may complete it with those courses that remain available, or they may combine them with the new course options. However, students must have at least one course on the ancient/medieval period (JWSC 20120-20199 or JWSC 12000 Jewish Civilization I: Ancient Beginnings to Early Medieval Period) and at least one on the modern period (JWSC 20220-20299 or JWSC 12001 Jewish Civilization II: Late Medieval to Modern Period). Students who began the requirement in Autumn Quarter 2018 or later may only use the new sequence to meet the general studies requirement in civilization studies.

Students may also fulfill the Jewish civilization requirement by participating in the “Jerusalem in Middle Eastern Civilizations” Study Abroad program, where they can earn credit for three courses in Jewish civilization (ancient, medieval, and modern) and one credit in modern Hebrew. (For more information about this program, please see the Study Abroad page of this catalog.)

Program Requirements

Advising

Students who have not completed the College’s general education requirements before starting the major should do so during their first year as Jewish Studies majors. Students are required to meet with the director of undergraduate studies before declaring a major in Jewish Studies. Each student in the major will have as an adviser a faculty member who is affiliated with the Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies.

Major in Jewish Studies

The major requires twelve courses distributed according to the guidelines that follow. A full, constantly updated list of courses approved for the major and minor is available on the Greenberg Center for Jewish Studies website at ccjs.uchicago.edu.

Language

Students must take three quarters of Hebrew (classical or modern) or Yiddish. If the student’s research project requires knowledge of a different language, the student may petition the committee to substitute that language in the place of Hebrew or Yiddish.

Jewish Civilization and Electives

Students in the major must take nine additional courses in Jewish Studies, for a total of twelve courses.

Jewish Civilization: Students in the major must complete either the two-quarter Jewish Civilization sequence or the Jerusalem Study Abroad program.

If students take one of these sequences to satisfy the general education requirement in civilization studies, one elective in the major must come from another civilization studies sequence pertinent to the area and period of the student’s primary interest in Jewish Studies.

For students who take a sequence outside Jewish Studies to satisfy the general education requirement in civilization studies, the two-course Jewish Civilization sequence (or three-course sequence offered in Jerusalem) will count among the JWSC electives required for the major.

Other Electives: The remaining courses must come from JWSC course offerings. These elective courses should normally focus in a specific area of concentration within Jewish Studies and should be chosen in consultation with the
director of undergraduate studies. Students who complete the option BA these (as described under Optional BA Paper) may count JWSC 29900 among these courses.

Beyond the requirements for the major, students are encouraged to take at least one course in method or theory pertaining to their area of concentration in Jewish Studies, whether it is a JWSC course that can count in the major or is simply a general elective credit.

Summary of Requirements

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three courses in Hebrew (or other language, with approval)</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine total JWSC courses</td>
<td>900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Note: Must include 1–3 Jewish civilization courses, as described under the Program Requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Units</td>
<td>1200</td>
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Optional BA Paper

Students who choose this option are to meet with their advisers by May 15 of their third year to determine the focus of the research project, and they are expected to begin reading and research for the BA paper during the summer before their fourth year. After further consultation, students are to continue guided readings and participate in a (formal or informal) tutorial during Autumn Quarter of their fourth year. Credit toward the major is received only for the Winter Quarter tutorial during which the BA paper is finally written and revised. The BA tutorial may count toward one of the courses related to Jewish Studies. The BA paper must be received by the primary reader by the end of fifth week of Spring Quarter. A BA paper is a requirement for consideration for honors.

This program may accept a BA paper or project used to satisfy the same requirement in another major if certain conditions are met and with the consent of the other program chair. Approval from both program chairs is required. Students should consult with the chairs by the earliest BA proposal deadline (or by the end of their third year, if neither program publishes a deadline). A consent form, to be signed by both chairs, is available from the College adviser. It must be completed and returned to the College adviser by the end of Autumn Quarter of the student’s year of graduation.

Honors

Honors are awarded to students who demonstrate excellence in their course work, as well as on the BA paper. To qualify for honors, students must register for JWSC 29900 (http://collegecatalog.uchicago.edu/search/?P=JWSC%2029900) BA Paper Preparation Course in addition to the twelve courses required in the general program of study, bringing the total number of courses required to thirteen. Students must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher and a GPA of 3.5 or higher in the major, and the BA paper must be judged to be at least of A- quality.

Grading

Students take all courses required for the major for quality grades.

Minor in Jewish Studies

The minor in Jewish Studies provides a basic introduction to the texts, cultures, languages, and history of the Jews and Judaism. Six courses are required for the minor, two of which are the Jewish Civilization sequence. The other courses may be in any area of Jewish Studies, including languages such as Hebrew and Yiddish; such courses can be identified by their JWSC prefix. Students can earn credit for three courses in Jewish civilization (ancient, medieval, and modern) and one credit in modern Hebrew by participating in the “Jerusalem in Middle Eastern Civilizations” Study Abroad program. (For more information about this program, please see the Study Abroad page of this catalog.)

Students who wish to do a minor in Jewish Studies must meet with the director of undergraduate studies before the end of the Spring Quarter of their third year to declare their intention to complete the minor. The director’s approval for the minor program will then be communicated to the student’s College adviser.

Courses taken to fulfill the requirements for the minor in Jewish Studies may not be double-counted with courses taken for the student’s major(s) or courses taken for other minors. Courses taken for the minor in Jewish Studies must be taken for quality grades.
Jewish Studies Courses

**JWSC 10300. Ancient Middle Eastern Religions. 100 Units.**
This course is an introduction to the religions of the ancient Middle East—Egypt, the Levant, Anatolia, and Mesopotamia—with an emphasis on the variety to these religions and the ways regional religious expression and practice changed over time. We will read several famous myths, hymns, and other narrowly "religious" texts—including excerpts from the Akkadian creation myth En#ma eliš, the Egyptian Book of the Dead, and a Hittite myth of a disappearing god. But we will also explore visual art and other material culture sources and we will read letters, treaties, and other more mundane texts to define how these sources differently show how religion manifested "on the ground." The social and political resonances of religion will be stressed, with examples ranging from kings dubiously claiming the rediscovery of important religious texts to international theft of divine statues. We will discuss the influence of ancient Middle Eastern religions on that of neighboring regions, especially the Greco-Roman world. Students will pursue creative projects with the goal of more deeply understanding ancient Middle Eastern religions; these may include adapting a known religious phenomenon to a different medium or genre or even fabricating new texts, images, or practices while demonstrating their innovative benefits and historical connections to skeptical adherents.
Instructor(s): Madadh Richey
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 10300, RLST 10300

**JWSC 11000-11100-11200. Biblical Aramaic; Old Aramaic Inscriptions; Imperial Aramaic.**
Three quarter sequence in Aramaic spanning Biblical Aramaic (Autumn), Old Aramaic (Spring), and Imperial Aramaic (Winter).

- **JWSC 11000. Biblical Aramaic. 100 Units.**
  This course provides a thorough introduction to the grammar of the Aramaic portions of the Hebrew Bible during the first few weeks. The remainder of the course is spent reading texts from the books of Daniel and Ezra.
  Instructor(s): S. Creason
  Terms Offered: Autumn
  Prerequisite(s): HEBR 10103 or equivalent.
  Equivalent Course(s): ARAM 10101

- **JWSC 11100. Old Aramaic Inscriptions. 100 Units.**
  Course in Old Aramaic Inscriptions
  Instructor(s): S. Creason
  Terms Offered: Spring
  Prerequisite(s): ARAM 10101 or equivalent.
  Equivalent Course(s): ARAM 10102

- **JWSC 11200. Imperial Aramaic. 100 Units.**
  Course in Imperial Aramaic
  Instructor(s): S. Creason
  Terms Offered: Winter
  Prerequisite(s): ARAM 10101 or equivalent.
  Equivalent Course(s): ARAM 10103

**JWSC 11000. Old Aramaic Inscriptions. 100 Units.**
Course in Old Aramaic Inscriptions
Instructor(s): S. Creason
Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): ARAM 10101 or equivalent.
Equivalent Course(s): ARAM 10102

**JWSC 11200. Imperial Aramaic. 100 Units.**
Course in Imperial Aramaic
Instructor(s): S. Creason
Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): ARAM 10101 or equivalent.
Equivalent Course(s): ARAM 10103

**JWSC 12000-12001. Jewish Civilization I-II.**
Jewish Civilization is a two-quarter sequence that explores the development of Jewish culture and tradition from its ancient beginnings through its rabbinic and medieval transformations to its modern manifestations. Through investigation of primary texts—biblical, Talmudic, philosophical, mystical, historical, documentary, and literary—students will acquire a broad overview of Jews, Judaism, and Jewishness while reflecting in greater depth on major themes, ideas, and events in Jewish history. Note: Jewish Studies revised its civilization studies courses starting in academic year 2018–19. Students who began the requirement prior to Autumn Quarter 2018, under the previous course options, may complete it with those courses that remain available, or they may combine them with the new course options. However, students must have at least one course on the ancient/medieval period (JWSC 20120-20199 or JWSC 12000 Jewish Civilization I: Ancient Beginnings to Early Medieval Period) and at least one on the modern period (JWSC 20220-20299 or JWSC 12001 Jewish Civilization II: Late Medieval to Modern Period). Students who began the requirement in Autumn Quarter 2018 or later may only use the new sequence to meet the general studies requirement in civilization studies.
JWSC 12000. Jewish Civilization I: Ancient Beginnings to Early Medieval Period. 100 Units.
Jewish Civilization is a two-quarter sequence that explores the development of Jewish culture and tradition from its ancient beginnings through its rabbinic and medieval transformations to its modern manifestations. Through investigation of primary texts-biblical, Talmudic, philosophical, mystical, historical, documentary, and literary-students will acquire a broad overview of Jews, Judaism, and Jewishness while reflecting in greater depth on major themes, ideas, and events in Jewish history. The Autumn course will deal with antiquity to the early medieval periods. Its readings will include works from the Bible, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Philo, Josephus, the Rabbis, Yehudah Halevi, and Maimonides. All sections of each course will share a common core of readings; individual instructors will supplement with other materials. It is recommended, though not required, that students take these two courses in sequence. Students who register for the Autumn Quarter course will automatically be pre-registered for the winter segment.
Instructor(s): J. Robinson Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 22010, MDVL 12000, NEHC 22010

JWSC 12001. Jewish Civilization II: Late Medieval to Modern Period. 100 Units.
Jewish Civilization is a two-quarter sequence that explores the development of Jewish culture and tradition from its ancient beginnings through its rabbinic and medieval transformations to its modern manifestations. Through investigation of primary texts-biblical, Talmudic, philosophical, mystical, historical, documentary, and literary-students will acquire a broad overview of Jews, Judaism, and Jewishness while reflecting in greater depth on major themes, ideas, and events in Jewish history. The Winter quarter will begin with the late medieval period and continue to the present. It will include discussions of mysticism, the works of Spinoza and Mendelssohn, the nineteenth-century reform, the Holocaust and its reflection in writers such as Primo Levi and Paul Celan, and literary pieces from postwar American Jewish and Israeli authors. All sections of each course will share a common core of readings; individual instructors will supplement with other materials. It is recommended, though not required, that students take these two courses in sequence. Students who register for the Autumn Quarter course will automatically be pre-registered for the winter segment.
Instructor(s): S. Hammerschlag Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 12010, NEHC 22011, RLST 22011

JWSC 20214. Devils and Demons: Agents of Evil in the Bible and Ancient World. 100 Units.
While the words "devil," "demon," and "Satan" usually conjure the image of a horned and hooved archfiend, this has not always been the case. Students in this course will discover both the origins of and complications to dominant popular images of "the Devil" by engaging ancient Middle Eastern and Mediterranean texts, including Mesopotamian literature, the Hebrew Bible, the New Testament, and other early Christian and Jewish texts. We will discuss Satan's origins as the biblical god Yahweh's henchman, Mesopotamian and Greco-Roman conceptions of subordinate divine entities, Hellenistic and Roman-period tendencies towards cosmic dualism, and much more. Students will also have the opportunity to explore pop culture and political discourse to examine how Biblical and other ancient demons productively recur in such contexts. A guiding question will be why the category of "demon" has proven so productive and necessary to diverse religious worldviews and what the common features and actions of these figures reveal about persistent human anxieties.
Instructor(s): Madadh Richey Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 20214, NEHC 20214

JWSC 20120. Introduction to the Hebrew Bible. 100 Units.
The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) is a complex anthology of disparate texts and reflects a diversity of religious, political, and historical perspectives from ancient Israel, Judah, and Yehud. Because this collection of texts continues to play an important role in modern religions, new meanings are often imposed upon it. In this course, we will attempt to read biblical texts apart from modern preconceptions about them. We will also contextualize their ideas and goals through comparison with texts from ancient Mesopotamia, Syro-Palestine, and Egypt. Such comparisons will demonstrate that the Hebrew Bible is fully part of the cultural milieu of the Ancient Near East. To accomplish these goals, we will read a significant portion of the Hebrew Bible in English, along with representative selections from secondary literature. We will also spend some time thinking about the nature of biblical interpretation.
Instructor(s): J. Stackert Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30504, RLST 11004, BIBL 31000, NEHC 20504
JWSC 20121. The Bible and Archaeology. 100 Units.
In this course we will look at how interpretation of evidence unearthed by archaeologists contributes to a historical-critical reading of the Bible, and vice versa. We will focus on the cultural background of the biblical narratives, from the stories of Creation and Flood to the destruction of the Jerusalem temple by the Romans in the year 70. No prior coursework in archaeology or biblical studies is required, although it will be helpful for students to have taken JWSC 20120 (Introduction to the Hebrew Bible).
Instructor(s): David Schloen Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30121, RLST 20121, NEHC 20121

JWSC 20223. Narratives of Assimilation. 100 Units.
This course offers a survey into the manifold strategies of representing the Jewish community in East Central Europe beginning from the nineteenth century to the Holocaust. Engaging the concept of liminality-of a society at the threshold of radical transformation-it will analyze Jewry facing uncertainties and challenges of the modern era and its radical changes. Students will be acquainted with problems of cultural and linguistic isolation, hybrid identity, assimilation, and cultural transmission through a wide array of genres-novel, short story, epic poem, memoir, painting, illustration, film. The course draws on both Jewish and Polish-Jewish sources; all texts are read in English translation.
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): REES 27003, RLST 26623, NEHC 30223, NEHC 20223, REES 37003

JWSC 20300-20400-20500. Elementary Yiddish I-II-III.
The goal of this sequence is to develop proficiency in Yiddish reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Touchstones of global Yiddish culture are also introduced through song, film, and contemporary Yiddish websites.

JWSC 20300. Elementary Yiddish I. 100 Units.
The goal of this sequence is to develop proficiency in Yiddish reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Touchstones of global Yiddish culture are also introduced through song, film, and contemporary Yiddish websites.
Instructor(s): Jessica Kirzane Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): YDDH 10100

JWSC 20400. Elementary Yiddish for Beginners-II. 100 Units.
In this course, students will extend basic Yiddish speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. By the end of the course, students should have a basic understanding of regional Yiddish variations in pronunciation and spelling, be able to understand and participate in a conversation in an increasingly comfortable and complex way, read simple texts with ease, have experience tackling more complex texts with the aid of a dictionary, and write short compositions with grammatical complexity. In the course of language study, students will also be exposed to key topics in the history of the Yiddish language and culture.
Instructor(s): Jessica Kirzane Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Yiddish 10100
Equivalent Course(s): YDDH 10200, YDDH 37400

JWSC 20500. Elementary Yiddish III. 100 Units.
In this course, students will acquire intermediate Yiddish speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. By the end of the course, students should be able to conduct a conversation on a wide range of topics, be comfortable tackling complex texts with the aid of a dictionary, and write short compositions with grammatical complexity. In the course of language study, students will also be exposed to key topics in the history of the Yiddish language and culture. Students will also be introduced to basic Yiddish research skills.
Equivalent Course(s): YDDH 37500, YDDH 10300

JWSC 20400. Elementary Yiddish for Beginners-II. 100 Units.
In this course, students will extend basic Yiddish speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. By the end of the course, students should have a basic understanding of regional Yiddish variations in pronunciation and spelling, be able to understand and participate in a conversation in an increasingly comfortable and complex way, read simple texts with ease, have experience tackling more complex texts with the aid of a dictionary, and write short compositions with grammatical complexity. In the course of language study, students will also be exposed to key topics in the history of the Yiddish language and culture.
Instructor(s): Jessica Kirzane Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Yiddish 10100
Equivalent Course(s): YDDH 10200, YDDH 37400
**JWSC 20435. From Seclusion to Global Success: Creativity and Politics on Israeli Television. 100 Units.**

Television is one of the major media phenomena of the 20th and 21st centuries. Television had a significant part in the building of the modern nation-state and is, nowadays, one of the main manifestations of global capitalism. The Israeli television market went from one public channel, dominated by the government, to become a leading exporter of television content to the Western World. During the semester we will review the political history of global and Israeli TV, we will learn to distinguish between different TV genres such as soap opera, sitcom, “reality” TV and quality drama series. We will explain how the growth of various creative products and different genres reflected both the political and economic zeitgeist.

Likewise, we will focus on how the unique characteristics of the Israeli television market brought about its international success. We will focus on the narratives of Israeli successful drama series such as Fauda (a series about an under-cover IDF unit aired on Netflix), In treatment (a psychological drama which was aired on HBO) and Homeland (an Israeli action format aired on Show-time) and try to explain their global success. We will also focus on how the various political minorities in Israel are represented on television and the political and social impact of their representation. In addition, we will discuss concepts such as “quality” and “trash” TV as concepts reflecting social, political and economic struggles.

Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): Open to advanced undergraduates.

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30435, NEHC 20435

**JWSC 20500. Elementary Yiddish III. 100 Units.**

In this course, students will acquire intermediate Yiddish speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. By the end of the course, students should be able to conduct a conversation on a wide range of topics, be comfortable tackling complex texts with the aid of a dictionary, and write short compositions with grammatical complexity. In the course of language study, students will also be exposed to key topics in the history of the Yiddish language and culture. Students will also be introduced to basic Yiddish research skills.

Equivalent Course(s): YDDH 37500, YDDH 10300

**JWSC 20701. The Jewish Graphic Novel. 100 Units.**

Over the past decade, there has been an explosion of “graphic novels” aimed at adult readers concerning Jewish society, history, and religion. This course explores the history of comics through the lens of its Jewish creators and Jewish themes, and the history of twentieth century Jewish culture through the lens of graphic storytelling. We learn to interpret this complex art form that combines words and hand-drawn images, translating temporal progression into a spatial form. Reading American, European, and Israeli narratives, our discussions will focus on autobiographical and journalistic accounts of uprooting, immigration, conflict, and loss. Authors whose work we will study include: Art Spiegelman, Rutu Modan, Leela Corman, Joann Sfar, Joe Sacco, R. Crumb.

Instructor(s): Na’ama Rokem

Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): RLST 26062, CMLT 20711, SIGN 26062, NEHC 26062

**JWSC 20895. The Construction of Jewish History in Israel. 100 Units.**

The course concerns the ways Jewish history has been constructed and conceptualized in the State of Israel since 1948. It will examine academic and para academic research, popular history books, TV series, educational programs, national archives and public ceremonies.

Instructor(s): Miriam Frenkel

Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 20895

**JWSC 21107. Readings in Maimonides’ Guide of the Perplexed. 100 Units.**

A careful study of select passages in Maimonides’ Guide of the Perplexed, focusing on the method of the work and its major philosophical-theological themes, including: divine attributes, creation vs. eternity, prophecy, the problem of evil and divine providence, law and ethics, the final aim of human existence.

Instructor(s): James Robinson

Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): HREL 45401, HIJD 45400, RLST 21107, FNDL 24106, ISLM 45400, MDVL 25400, RLVC 45400, NEHC 40470

**JWSC 22000-22100-22200. Elementary Classical Hebrew I-II-III.**

The purpose of this three-quarter sequence is to enable the student to read biblical Hebrew prose with a high degree of comprehension. The sequence is divided into two segments: (1) the first two quarters are devoted to acquiring the essentials of descriptive and historical grammar (including translation to and from Hebrew, oral exercises, and grammatical analysis); and (2) the third quarter is spent examining prose passages from the Hebrew Bible and includes a review of grammar.

**JWSC 22000. Elementary Classical Hebrew I. 100 Units.**

The first two quarters are devoted to acquiring the essentials of descriptive and historical grammar (including translation to and from Hebrew, oral exercises, and grammatical analysis).

Instructor(s): S. Creason

Note(s): This class meets 5 times a week

Equivalent Course(s): HEBR 10101, JWSC 30101
JWSC 22100. Elementary Classical Hebrew II. 100 Units.
The first two quarters are devoted to acquiring the essentials of descriptive and historical grammar (including translation to and from Hebrew, oral exercises, and grammatical analysis).
Instructor(s): S. Creason Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): HEBR 10101 or equivalent
Note(s): This class meets 5 times a week
Equivalent Course(s): HEBR 10102

JWSC 22200. Elementary Classical Hebrew III. 100 Units.
The third quarter is spent examining prose passages from the Hebrew Bible and includes a review of grammar.
Instructor(s): S. Creason Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): HEBR 10102
Note(s): This class meets 5 times a week
Equivalent Course(s): HEBR 10103, JWSG 30300

JWSC 22300-22400-22500. Intermediate Classical Hebrew I-II-III.
A continuation of Elementary Classical Hebrew. The first quarter consists of reviewing grammar, and of reading and analyzing further prose texts. The last two quarters are devoted to an introduction to Hebrew poetry with readings from Psalms, Proverbs, and the prophets.

JWSC 22300. Intermediate Classical Hebrew I. 100 Units.
The first quarter consists of reviewing grammar, and of reading and analyzing further prose texts.
Instructor(s): D. Pardee Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): HEBR 10103 or equivalent
Equivalent Course(s): HEBR 20104

JWSC 22400. Intermediate Classical Hebrew II. 100 Units.
The last two quarters are devoted to an introduction to Hebrew poetry with readings from Psalms, Proverbs, and the prophets.
Instructor(s): D. Pardee Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): HEBR 20104 or equivalent
Equivalent Course(s): HEBR 20105

JWSC 22500. Intermediate Classical Hebrew III. 100 Units.
The last two quarters are devoted to an introduction to Hebrew poetry with readings from Psalms, Proverbs, and the prophets.
Instructor(s): D. Pardee Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): HEBR 20105 or equivalent
Equivalent Course(s): HEBR 20106
JWSC 23118. Gender and Sexuality in Jewish Society: Early Modernity through the Present. 100 Units.
In this course, we will examine how gender and sexuality shaped Jewish historical experience, identity, ideology, and imagination from the mid-seventeenth century until today. Using the tools of gender analysis, we will explore the historical realities of women and men in Jewish society through critical reading of primary sources (in translation), and discussion of modern research. No prior background in Jewish Studies is necessary. Topics include: the construction of gender in modern Jewish society; historical intersections of sexuality and Jewish practice; gender and power relations in the Jewish family; emancipation and assimilation; gender and Jewish literature; Jews and the rise of feminist movements; masculinity and Zionism; sex, gender, and the Holocaust.
Instructor(s): Band, Anna Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 23118, HIST 23415

JWSC 24105. Letters to Zion. 100 Units.
This seminar centers the question: what do we mean when we describe Jewish authors and thinkers from the past as Zionist, anti-Zionist, or non-Zionist? We will approach this question by reading three correspondences: Kafka's letters to Felice Bauer, and the correspondences between Gershom Scholem and Hannah Arendt and between Paul Celan and Ilana Shmueli.
In each case, the question of Zionism and of Israel looms in the background of the exchange in some way. Our key question is: can we definitively determine the position of each of these letter-writers on the question of Zionism? And do we want to? Or does the form of the correspondence rather open a possibility for a more flexible, complex account of their positions, allowing us to think of them as changing and evolving, indeed as dialogic? In addition to the letters themselves, we will read other texts by these authors and about them, as well as background reading on the letter as genre and as historical document.
We will also take note of the fact that these are all exchanges that cross the gender divide and ask how the question of Zionist ideology intersects with issues of gender in Jewish history.
Instructor(s): Na'ama Rokem Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 24105, CMLT 34105

JWSC 24650. Introduction to Kabbalah. 100 Units.
A general introduction to the origins and development of Kabbalah, focusing on the classic period of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. We will read samples from the major texts and most important movements, including the Bahir and Isaac the Blind in Provence, the Gerona circle (Ezra, Azriel, Nachmanides), and developments in Castile, from Ibn Latif and Ibn Sahula to Abraha Abulafia and Joseph Ibn Gikatilla to Moses de Leon and the Zohar.
Instructor(s): James T. Robinson Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 25500, RLST 21205, HIJD 35500

JWSC 25000-25100-25200. Introductory Modern Hebrew I-II-III.
This three-quarter sequence introduces students to reading, writing, and speaking modern Hebrew. All four language skills are emphasized: comprehension of written and oral materials; reading of nondiacritical text; writing of directed sentences, paragraphs, and compositions; and speaking. Students learn the Hebrew root pattern system and the seven basic verb conjugations in both the past and present tenses, as well as simple future. At the end of the year, students can conduct short conversations in Hebrew, read materials designed to their level, and write a short essay.

JWSC 25000. Introductory Modern Hebrew-I. 100 Units.
This three quarter course introduces students to reading, writing, and speaking modern Hebrew. All four language skills are emphasized: comprehension of written and oral materials; reading of nondiacritical text; writing of directed sentences, paragraphs, and compositions; and speaking. Students learn the Hebrew root pattern system and the seven basic verb conjugations in both the past and present tenses, as well as simple future. At the end of the year, students can conduct short conversations in Hebrew, read materials designed to their level, and write short essay.
Instructor(s): A. Almog Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HEBR 10501

JWSC 25100. Introductory Modern Hebrew-II. 100 Units.
This three quarter course introduces students to reading, writing, and speaking modern Hebrew. All four language skills are emphasized: comprehension of written and oral materials; reading of nondiacritical text; writing of directed sentences, paragraphs, and compositions; and speaking. Students learn the Hebrew root pattern system and the seven basic verb conjugations in both the past and present tenses, as well as simple future. At the end of the year, students can conduct short conversations in Hebrew, read materials designed to their level, and write short essay.
Instructor(s): A. Almog Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): HEBR 10501 or equivalent
Equivalent Course(s): HEBR 10502

JWSC 25200. Introductory Modern Hebrew III. 100 Units.
This three quarter course introduces students to reading, writing, and speaking modern Hebrew. All four language skills are emphasized: comprehension of written and oral materials; reading of nondiacritical text; writing of directed sentences, paragraphs, and compositions; and speaking. Students learn the Hebrew root pattern system and the seven basic verb conjugations in both the past and present tenses, as well as simple future. At the end of the year, students can conduct short conversations in Hebrew, read materials designed to their level, and write short essays.
Instructor(s): A. Almog Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): HEBR 10502 or equivalent
Equivalent Course(s): HEBR 10503
JWSC 25100. Introductory Modern Hebrew-II. 100 Units.
This three quarter course introduces students to reading, writing, and speaking modern Hebrew. All four language skills are emphasized: comprehension of written and oral materials; reading of nondiacritical text; writing of directed sentences, paragraphs, and compositions; and speaking. Students learn the Hebrew root pattern system and the seven basic verb conjugations in both the past and present tenses, as well as simple future. At the end of the year, students can conduct short conversations in Hebrew, read materials designed to their level, and write short essay.
Instructor(s): A. Almog Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): HEBR 10501 or equivalent
Equivalent Course(s): HEBR 10502

JWSC 25200. Introductory Modern Hebrew III. 100 Units.
This three quarter course introduces students to reading, writing, and speaking modern Hebrew. All four language skills are emphasized: comprehension of written and oral materials; reading of nondiacritical text; writing of directed sentences, paragraphs, and compositions; and speaking. Students learn the Hebrew root pattern system and the seven basic verb conjugations in both the past and present tenses, as well as simple future. At the end of the year, students can conduct short conversations in Hebrew, read materials designed to their level, and write short essays.
Instructor(s): A. Almog Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): HEBR 10502 or equivalent
Equivalent Course(s): HEBR 10503

JWSC 25020. Culture and Zionism. 100 Units.
This seminar will examine the intersection of culture and Zionism. We will begin by considering the historical formation referred to as "cultural Zionism" and examining its ideological underpinnings. Other topics include: Hebrew revival, the role of culture in the Zionist revolution, Israeli culture as Zionist culture. Readings include: Ahad Haam, Haim Nahman Bialik, S.Y. Agnon, Orly Kastel-Blum, Edward Said, Benjamin Harshav.
Instructor(s): Na'ama Rokem Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 25020, NEHC 25020, HIJD 35020, NEHC 35020, CMLT 35020

JWSC 25149. Anthropology of Israel. 100 Units.
This seminar explores the dynamics of Israeli culture and society through a combination of weekly screenings of Israeli fiction and documentary films with readings from ethnographic and other relevant research. Among the topics to be covered in this examination of the institutional and ideological construction of Israeli identity/ies: the absorption of immigrants; ethnic, class, and religious tensions; the kibbutz; military experience; the Holocaust; evolving attitudes about gender and sexuality; the struggle for minorities' rights; and Arab-Jewish relations.
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 25150, NEHC 35147, CMES 35150, NEHC 25147, MAPS 35150, ANTH 35150

JWSC 26010. God and the Good Life. 100 Units.
Do we need God to know right from wrong? Or should morality shape and limit (or forbid) religious belief? Should we worry more about uncertainty and ignorance or overconfidence and fanaticism? This course focuses on the religious quest for certainty about how we should live. We will explore a variety of perspectives on the possibilities and problems involved in efforts to connect belief in God to moral knowledge and behavior. Readings include the Hebrew and Christian Bibles, the Quran, Plato, Kant, Kierkegaard, and Feuerbach, as well as more recent voices like Martin Luther King and contemporary critics of religion.
Instructor(s): David Barr Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 21010

JWSC 26030. Flooding the World: Creation and Restoration in the Levant, Mesopotamia, and India. 100 Units.
From Genesis to the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Rig Veda to modern novels like Geraldine McCaughrean's Not the End of the World (2004) and Jeanette Winterson's Boating for Beginners (1997), humans have repeatedly accounted for, imagined, and ironized civilization's collapse and restoration through stories of catastrophic floods. These texts, modern and ancient, are fraught with political, religious, and historical background. In this course, we will compare these texts, focusing on literary issues like narrative plot, the construction of characters, the literary devices used, and the role of the narrator in telling the story of the flood. We will attempt to ascertain why imaginings of a deluge are generative, while being attuned to the complex differences between the ancient narratives and their significantly different afterlives. Through sustained inquiry, we will both challenge notion of sacred exceptionalism even while confronting the enduring presence of this trope in the post-modern novel.
Instructor(s): Cathleen Chopra-McGowan Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 22330
JWSC 26050. Murder, Adultery, and Thy Neighbor’s Ass: The Ten Commandments in the Hebrew Bible and America. 100 Units.
The Ten Commandments, presented in the Hebrew Bible millennia ago, inhabit a curious place in American society, one that is continually being redefined, contested, and entrenched. This course interrogates the nature of the commandments' history: the biblical text contains two competing presentations of the commandments, in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. We will examine these passages, situating them in their literary contexts, and in the broader context of Ancient Near Eastern law codes. Are the commandments moral guidelines or legal injunctions? What kind of status do they claim for themselves, and when are they to be enforced? By whom, and for whom? Do the commandments have the same function in both texts (Ex 20 and Deut 5)? Addressing these questions will have salience for understanding how the Decalogue has been used to reinforce and define particular kinds of communities and ideologies within the United States.
Instructor(s): Cathleen Chopra-McGowan Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): Rlst 22050

JWSC 26210. Oedipus in Zion: The Oedipal Figure in Modern Hebrew Literature. 100 Units.
Historians often refer to the emergence of Zionism as an "Oedipal Revolution. Hence, the secular son's rebellion against his orthodox father is understood as the thrust that triggered the modern Jewish revolution. Alan Mintz aptly described the inter-generational rift between fathers and sons at the turn of the 20th century as a tragic yet inevitable consequence of modernity, underscoring the psychological difficulties and political dilemmas that haunted the sons who were "banished form their father's table. This seminar will focus on the (highly androcentric) oedipal figure in literary theory and explore its prominence in modern Hebrew literature. Freud's preoccupation with the Oedipus complex at the turn of the century coincided with the emergence of a powerful oedipal narrative in modern Hebrew culture. This confluence provides a fascinating backdrop to the "invention" of the Oedipus complex. We will read a variety of literary texts which rework the oedipal figure from the late century to the 1980s and beyond.
Instructor(s): Michael Gluzman
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 26210, CMLT 36210

JWSC 27029. Survival. 100 Units.
This course will discuss the complex experience of survival, its forms and conceptualizations. Not limited to a historical discourse, the course's content and scope are framed by modernity, beginning in the 19th century biological notion of survival through its subsequent milestone articulation by Franz Rosenzweig and concluding in the selective reading from a plethora of post-Holocaust writings. What does it mean to survive? According to those who during WWII lived on the narrow threshold between life and death and survived its precariousness, survival depended on diverse rational and irrational factors such as faith (extrinsic or intrinsic), health, age, wealth, egoism, coincidence, hope, and luck that often verge on the miraculous; thus, no discursive centrality would be ascribed to any of the forms of survival under our investigation. During the course we will become familiar with historical, philosophical, and biographical accounts of survival.
Instructor(s): Bozena Shallcross Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): REES 27029, FNDL 27029, REES 37029

JWSC 27650. Yiddish Literature in America. 100 Units.
This course examines a wide range of Yiddish literary production in America. We will read poetry and prose from authors such as Sholem Aleichem, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Yenta Serdatsky, Morris Rosenfeld, I. J. Schwartz, Moyalsh Leyb Halpern, Celia Dropkin, Lamed Shapiro, Joseph Opatoshu, Fradl Shток, Jacob Glatstein, and Blume Lempel. We will explore themes such as Sholem Aleichem, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Yenta Serdatsky, Morris Rosenfeld, I. J. Schwartz, Moyshe Leyb Halpern, Celia Dropkin, Lamed Shapiro, Joseph Opatoshu, Fradl Shток, Jacob Glatstein, and Blume Lempel. We will explore themes
Instructor(s): Jessica Kirzane Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): Yiddh 22000, Yiddh 32000

JWSC 27703. In the Beginning": Origin, Style, and Transformation in the King James Version Matrix. 100 Units.
The 400th anniversary of the King James Bible (KJV) set off a series of events and texts dedicated to the great influence of this literary classic—a vernacular English Bible from 1611. What is it about the KJV that has so obsessed readers and writers? How has it become part of and affected world literature? Are there competing ways of conceiving the biblical text in English? How has the KJV's astounding centrality in modern literature? This course will discuss the influence of the KJV in modern literature, including its formative role in the development of the English language. We will examine the KJV as a literary text in its own right, as well as its influence on subsequent translations and adaptations. The course will also explore the political and ideological motivations behind the KJV's translation and its reception in American society, including its role in the development of the English language. We will examine the KJV as a literary text in its own right, as well as its influence on subsequent translations and adaptations. The course will also explore the political and ideological motivations behind the KJV's translation and its reception in American society, including its role in the development of the English language.
Instructor(s): Chloe Blackshear Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 25113, ENGL 25113
JWSC 27713. Noting New Under the Sun? "Adapting" in Twentieth-Century Jewish Literature. 100 Units.

How do works as disparate as Jerry Siegel and Joe Schuster's first Superman comics, Joseph Roth's moving Job (1930), or Cynthia Ozick's golem novel The Puttermesser Papers (1997) treat the histories, genres, and texts they (arguably) refashion?

In this course, we will take on and close-read a variety of fictions, treating these both as stand-alone works of art in their own right as well as participants in a kind of literary lineage (and sometimes a very non-linear one!). With the help of Linda Hutcheon's Theory of Adaptation and other theorists, we will engage with different kinds of transfer (Bible to Novel, Fiction to Film/Televison; Archve to Drama; Original to Translation, etc.). We will explore different ways of understanding "adaptation" as a concept across linguistic, temporal, and geographic axes, and we will also consider texts and stories which push against and challenge definitions of adaptation. Ultimately, we will ask: What counts as adaptation, and why adapt? Does the art of adaptation and remix take on particular resonances for Jewish diasporic and immigrant writers in the twentieth century? How do these authors and creators pull "original" works, stories and history into new contexts? How do they draw readers and audiences in to alternate, unfamiliar forms? How do popular genres deal with the weight of tradition? How do these fictions negotiate between the familiar and the strange, and to what ends?

Instructor(s): Chloe Blackshear
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 27703, ENGL 27713

JWSC 28110. Queer Jewish Literature. 100 Units.

Spanning medieval Hebrew to contemporary Yiddish, this course will explore the intersections of Jewish literature and queer theory, homophobia and antisemitism. While centered on literary studies, the syllabus will also include film, visual art, and music. Literary authors will include Bashevis Singer, Qalonymus ben Qalonymus, Irena Klepfisz, and others. Theorists will include Eve Sedgwick, Zohar Weiman-Kelman, Sander Gilman, and others. Readings will be in English translation.

Instructor(s): Anna Elena Torres
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 38110, CMLT 38110, CMLT 28110, CRES 28110, GNSE 28110

JWSC 28139. Society, Politics and Security in Israel. 100 Units.

This graduate course examines Israel's unique DNA through a thorough examination of its history, society, politics and security challenges. We shall explore these traits as manifested in the defining chapters of Israel's history, since the early stages of the Zionist driven immigration of Jews to the Holy Land, through the establishment of the Jewish State in 1948, until present time. Students will work with primary sources, diverse theoretical perspectives, and rich historiographical material to better understand the Israeli experience, through domestic, regional and international perspectives. Particular attention will be given to the emergence of the Israeli vibrant society and functioning democracy in the background of continuous conflict and wars. The course will explore topics such as: How Israel reconciles between the imperatives and narratives of democracy and Jewishness, between collective ethos and heterogeneous tribalism, and between protracted security challenges and resilience. We will also discuss the multifaceted aspects of the changing Israeli security doctrine and practice, in light of regional threats and international involvement.

Instructor(s): M. Elran
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): INRE 36001, PBPL 28139

JWSC 28315. Grey Zones: Ethics and Decision-Making in the Holocaust. 100 Units.

How do ordinary men become ruthless killers? What constitutes 'collaboration' or 'resistance' in the context of total war and genocide? How can we analyze human behavior in a world where normal rules of ethical conduct do not apply? Nearly 75 years after the liberation of Auschwitz, the Holocaust still stands as a touchstone in debates about ethics, morality, agency, historical memory, democracy, citizenship, and human rights. This course is foregrounded in the notion that human behavior during Holocaust cannot be understood through the extreme binaries of good and evil, or black versus white. Rather, we will explore the complexities and nuances of human behavior in extremis. Through a series of case studies, we will focus on the experience and behavior of six (sometimes overlapping) groups of people: perpetrators, victims, bystanders, collaborators, resisters, and rescuers. In doing so, we will pay close attention to the moral considerations and ethical dilemmas that influenced their decision-making, as well as the ways in which gender, class, age, ethnicity, and political and religious ideology influenced these choices. At the same time, we will examine the effects that strategic considerations, as well as actual, available options, had on human behavior during this momentous state-sponsored genocide. In grappling with the dilemmas of human agency, we will critically evaluate the changing meanings of human rights, choice, trauma, and survival throughout the course of the Holocaust.

Instructor(s): Anna Band, Graduate Lecturer
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HMRT 28315, HIST 22019
JWSC 28881. Secrecy and Exemplarity: On Parables and Their Interpretation, from the Bible to Walter Benjamin. 
100 Units.

A parable - usually defined as "a short narrative told for an ulterior purpose" - should be easy to understand, given its apparent simplicity and didacticism. So why does it turn out to be so difficult, in practice, to interpret parables? From Jesus's parables and Plato's famous parable of the cave onward, parables have led reader after reader to the disturbing realization that it might in fact be the parables which read their interpreters, and not the other way around! In this course, we'll ask how it is that this particular literary form so deftly articulates the relations between text and reader, narrative and interpretation, literature and religion, secrecy and power, sign and meaning, concealment and revelation, fiction and truth. The course serves as both an introduction to the history of the many ways interpreters have engaged the parabolic form in religious, literary, and philosophical contexts, on the one hand, and a chance to develop the intensity and rigor of our own close-reading practices, on the other. Besides biblical and rabbinic parables, we will read parables in works by Plato, Maimonides, La Fontaine, Pascal, G.E. Lessing, Kant, Andersen, Hawthorne, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Kafka, W. Benjamin, and O. Welles.

Instructor(s): Sam Catlin Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 28881, RLST 28881, GRMN 28881, ENGL 28881

JWSC 29550. Cinema and the Holocaust. 100 Units.

Focuses on cinematic responses by several leading film directors from East & Central Europe to a central event of 20th century history -- the Holocaust. Nazis began a cinematic documentation of WWII at its onset, positioning cameras in places of actual atrocities. Documentary footage produced was framed by hostile propagandistic schemes; contrary to this 'method', Holocaust feature films are all but a representation of Jewish genocide produced after the actual traumatic events. This class aims at discussing the challenge of representing the Jewish genocide which has often been defined as un-representable. Because of this challenge, Holocaust films raise questions of ethical responsibility for cinematic production & a search for relevant artistic means with which to engage post-traumatic representation. Therefore, among major tropes we will analyze voyeuristic evocation of death & suffering; a truthful representation of violence versus purported necessity of its cinematic aesthetization; intertwined notions of chance & hope as conditions of survival versus hagiographic representation of victims. The main goal is to grasp the potential of cinema for deepening our understanding of the Holocaust, the course simultaneously explores extensive & continuous cinematic production of the genre & its historical development in various European countries, to mention the impact of censorship by official ideologies in the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, & Czechoslovakia during the Cold War.

Instructor(s): Bozena Shallcross Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Course requirements: film screenings, class participation, reading assignments, one class presentation, and a final project. All readings for the core texts are in English; they can be downloaded from Canvas.
Equivalent Course(s): REES 37027, CMST 32507, REES 27027, CMST 22507

JWSC 29560. Reckoning With the Holocaust. 100 Units.

In the years since the end of WWII, many thinkers have striven to make sense of the horrors of the Holocaust, interrogating not only its causes but also its enduring effects. In this course, we will grapple with questions and concerns that have emerged through these reflections and have helped shape what might be broadly-termed post-Holocaust thought. How might the Holocaust trouble notions of history, testimony and representation? What kinds of ethical, theological, and philosophical traditions might or ought the Holocaust call into question, and what new concerns arise as a result of the Holocaust? In the wake of the Holocaust, what must be re-thought? We will examine testimonial and documentary works that attempt to bear witness to the Holocaust, as well as works that argue for the necessity of such endeavors. We will read philosophical and theological arguments about how to understand the horrors of the Holocaust, and poetry, literature, and art that ask us to consider the challenges - both practical and ethical - in representing the Holocaust. We will consider the historical contexts in which these works were produced, tracking some of the shifts and developments in scholarship about the Holocaust over the last seventy years and asking what is at stake in studying the Holocaust today. Throughout the term, we will pay particular attention to works by Jewish authors, many of whom offer us complex ruminations on their own relationships to the Holocaust.

Instructor(s): Bevin Blaber Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 23416

JWSC 29700. Reading and Research Course. 100 Units.

TBD
Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Winter
Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor and Undergraduate Program Adviser
Note(s): Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form.
JWSC 29914. Jewish Diasporas: The Exilic Condition and the Parable of Longing. 100 Units.
This course examines the representations of the home across national literatures in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. More specifically, we will explore how the concept of home-real or imagined-is treated in instances of exile and migration that result in cultural hybridity. To explore the ambiguous relationship between home and homeland, students will engage with texts written by Jewish authors of different nationalities. We will focus on the European and Israeli context, exploring how the notion of home or homelessness, as well as historical changes, compel us to rethink the making of a Jewish home. We will also consider how the representation of homes and a homesickness/homeness dialectics shift across cultures and languages, paying particular attention to figures like the European Jew, the Wandering Jew, the Zionist Jew, the Hebrew Jew, and the Israeli Jew. We will trace the Jewish sense of displacement through the interplay between language and place, as we consider the literary representations of the Eastern European Shtetl, Vienna, Berlin, and Jerusalem. We will also consider the choice of language, and space of language as home.
Instructor(s): Michal Peles Almagor
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 29914

JWSC 29900. BA Preparation Course. 100 Units.
Terms Offered: Autumn, Winter, Spring
Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor and Undergraduate Program Adviser
Note(s): Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Required of honors candidates. May be taken for P/F grading with consent of instructor.
Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

- Times was used instead of Trajan.
- Times was used instead of Palatino.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.