Yiddish Studies

Minor Program in Yiddish Studies

Students in any field may complete a minor in Yiddish Studies. A combination of six language and literature/culture courses are required for the minor, which should be designed in consultation with the program coordinator, Jessica Kirzane, jkirzane@uchicago.edu.

Six courses are required for the minor, typically:

• YDDH 10100-10200-10300 Elementary Yiddish for Beginners I-II-III
• Three additional courses, which may include:
  • YDDH 20100 Intermediate Yiddish I and YDDH 20200 Intermediate Yiddish II: Archival Skills
  • YDDH 21001 Advanced Yiddish I: Yiddish One-Acts
  • YDDH 22321 Advanced Seminar in Yiddish: Lamed Shapiro
  • YDDH 23421 Advanced Seminar in Yiddish: Representations of Race and Racism
  • Yiddish literature/culture courses

Students who elect the minor program in Yiddish Studies must meet with the program administrator before the end of Spring Quarter of their third year to declare their intention to complete the minor and must submit the Consent to Complete a Minor Program form (https://humanities-web.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/college-prod/s3fs-public/documents/Consent_Minor_Program.pdf) to their College adviser.

Courses in the minor may not be double counted with the student’s major(s) or with other minors and may not be counted toward general education requirements. Courses in the minor must be taken for quality grades, and more than half of the requirements for the minor must be met by registering for courses bearing University of Chicago course numbers.

Summary of Requirements: Minor in Yiddish Studies

Six courses are required for the minor, typically:

YDDH 10100-10200-10300  Elementary Yiddish for Beginners I-II-III  300
Three additional Yiddish courses  300
Total Units  600

Yiddish Courses

YDDH 10100-10200-10300. Elementary Yiddish for Beginners 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.

YDDH 10100. 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): JWSC 20300

YDDH 10200. 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): YDDH 10100
Equivalent Course(s): JWSC 20400, YDDH 37400

YDDH 10300. 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, JWSC 20500
YDDH 21003. Advanced Yiddish: Yiddish Children’s Literature. 100 Units.
Modern Yiddish children’s literature developed during a time of enormous political and social upheaval across the Yiddish-speaking world. Writers addressed an audience of children to explain, reassure, inspire, and educate them toward identities as Jews in a complex modern world. In this course we will read children’s literature in the Yiddish originals and will discuss in Yiddish. Students will be expected to produce oral presentations on a story or author, short blog-style responses in Yiddish to the texts we read together, and a collaborative creative final project. This course is designed to accommodate students of a variety of language levels - the minimum requirement is one year of Yiddish or its equivalent, determined by the instructor.
Instructor(s): Jessica Kirzane Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): JWSC 21024

YDDH 21023. Translating Yiddish Literature. 100 Units.
This course will primarily be a workshop for sharing, revising and refining our own translations-in-progress from Yiddish literature. Drawing from a corpus of Yiddish texts written in or about Chicago, we will explore and translate within a variety of genres. Each week, in addition to our continuing work on translation projects, we will study the work of translation. This will include comparing different English translations of Yiddish literary texts, as well as examining Yiddish translations of English texts, to discuss how translators make decisions and the impact these decisions have on the resulting text; reading (in English) and discussing (in Yiddish) major theoretical texts about translation studies; and examining Yiddish language texts about translation. All of this study will inform our own translations. At the end of the term, the class will create profile of polished translations of Chicago Yiddish writing, together with translators’ introductions, which (with the permission of the students) may be distributed to future courses on Chicago Jewish history and culture.
Instructor(s): Jessica Kirzane Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): The prerequisite for this course is at least one full year of Yiddish language study or its equivalent, with instructor permission.
Equivalent Course(s): JWSC 21023