

JEWISH THOUGHT COURSE LIST - FALL 2015

JDS 103 - Introduction to Judaism - Sergey Dolgopolski

This course offers a survey of Judaism and the rich Jewish legacy: Basic philosophical, theological, social and political values and practices of Judaism as they developed over time in a variety of social and political environments.

T/TH 1:00pm-2:20pm - 708 Clemens Hall

JDS 207 - Love and the Erotic in Jewish and Western Thought - Alexander Green

This course will explore the phenomenon of love and desire by asking why humans love and what the object of desire is. What are the different types of love? Is the content of love rationally explainable or is it something beyond description? Is love a hopeless ideal or a realistic possibility? Does society encourage desire or see it as a threat? To investigate these questions we will begin by comparing Plato's classic dialogue the *Symposium* to biblical writings such as the *Song of Songs*. We will then ask how the medieval Abrahamic theologians reconceived the biblical God as the paradigm for love, followed by its transformation in modern literature.

T/TH 2:00pm-3:20pm - 110 Capen Hall

JDS 212/COL 275 - Special Topics - Human and Animal - Noam Pines

The course will examine various depictions of human-animal relationship in Western literature and culture, from classical times to modern times. By looking at these texts, we will chart the emergence of a figure that occupies a borderline state between human and animal, and explore its implications for our understanding of Jewish and Christian relationships as well as human and animal nature. Readings include: Ovid, Marie de Frances, Hobbes, Shakespeare, Heine, Baudelaire, Tolstoy, Nietzsche, Kafka, and more.

T/TH 11:00am-12:20pm - 640 Clemens

JDS 254 - Interpreting the Old Testament: the Great Jewish Commentators - Alexander Green

How did Jews interpret the Bible before biblical criticism? We will examine the different methodologies of classic interpreters such as Rashi, Nachmanides, Ibn Ezra, Gersonides, Arama and Abravanel through the varied approaches of midrash, philosophy, philology and mysticism. Topics to be discussed through creation, leadership, ethics, sexuality, religious polemics, time, history, and Mosaic authorship.

T/TH 9:30am-10:50am - 708 Clemens Hall

JDS 280 - Jewish Mysticism - Marla Segol

What is kabbalah? How does it work? Whose is it anyway?

In this course we will explore Jewish Mysticism from its earliest sources in the Torah and the Talmud to its manifestations on the internet in the present. We'll focus on the development of its symbols, where they came from, and how they signify. We'll look at the role that bodies play- how much does it matter what its practitioners do, and how they do it? In that same vein, we'll look at gender categories, and how they organize thought and action in a kabbalistic cosmos. Finally we'll consider the notion of authenticity. Who has a right to claim its symbols, its texts, its cosmological models, and its powers as their own? By the end of the course students will be familiar with the core texts in kabbalah, they will have a good grasp of its cosmological models, knowledge of the range of ideas about how the texts work, for whom, and why people think so.

T/TH 11:00am-12:20pm - 708 Clemens Hall

JDS 301 - Psychology of Religious Ecstasy: Sex, drugs, Rock & Roll and Religion - Marla Segol

This course will explore religious ecstasy, cultivated by the ritual use of sexuality, intoxicants, music and trance. These present opportunities for psychically and physically intense experiences, and they can induce [transpersonal](#) and [ecstatic states](#), as well as those of [euphoria](#), [harmonization](#) and [interconnectedness](#), sometimes called 'peak' and 'flow' experiences. We'll look at how peak and flow experiences are generated by these means, how religious institutions authorize or sanction those practices, and the ways in which they are integrated into religious canons, rituals, and lives.

T/TH 3:30pm-4:50pm - 708 Clemens Hall

JDS 402/COL 724- Jewish Law In Development - Sergey Dolgopolski

Historical, sociological, and legal concerns in early and later rabbinic literature; how Jewish life and thought relate to trends in legal interpretation through the centuries.

Monday 6:30pm - 9:10pm - 708 Clemens Hall

JDS 426/COL 721 - Special Topics, Melancholia - Noam Pines

This course will explore the various aspects of melancholia as a poetic and existential condition. Melancholia will emerge as a mode of poetic inspiration, a secularized perspective on the world, and a form of allegorical knowledge in which human essence is

reconciled with nature. Readings will include: Baudelaire, Kafka, Benjamin, Kristeva, and more.

Tuesday 5:00pm - 7:40pm - 708 Clemens Hall

JDS 455/PHI 589 - Contemporary Philosophy: Levinas and Ethics - Richard A. Cohen

Emmanuel Levinas developed one of the most important philosophies of the 20th century, based in ethics but responding to all Western thought and spirituality, as well as to historical events such as War and Genocide. In this seminar we will engage in close reading of selections from his two chief works: *Totality and Infinity* (1961) and *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* (1974), to discover precisely what is original in his thought and how and why it challenges us today. For instance, given the priority usually accorded to science and knowledge, what does Levinas mean in claim that ethics is first philosophy? We will also consider Levinas's proximity and distance from the epistemology of Kant, the phenomenology of Husserl, the ontology of Heidegger, well as other encounters and arguments in philosophy and religion.

Wednesday 1:00pm - 3:50 pm - 141 Park Hall

HEBREW

HEB 101 - Elementary Modern Hebrew I - Lilia Dolgopolskaia

The beginning course of Modern Israeli Hebrew. Essentials of grammar, syntax and conversational practice; elementary reading and writing. Note: Students with other previous experience in Hebrew must take a placement exam.

M-W 9:00am-10:25am - Location TBA (North Campus)

HEB 201 - Intermediate Hebrew 1 - Lilia Dolgopolskaia

Further development of language skills; listening comprehension, oral efficiency, intermediate grammar and syntax, reading and writing. Note: Students with other previous experience in Hebrew must take a placement exam.

M-W 11:00am - 12:20 pm - 708 Clemens Hall