Meetings: Tue/Thur 9:30 AM – 10:45 AM
Office Hours: Tue/Thur 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM
Arts North 412

Professor: Rabbi Scott Meltzer
Email: meltzer@mail.sdsu.edu
Phone: 858.752.1329

Catalog Description: Jewish history, culture, theory, and practice. Biblical roots of modern Jewish beliefs, basic movements within modern Judaism; Jewish calendar and Jewish life cycle as seen in Hebrew Bible, short stories, and films.

Prerequisites: Three units of religious studies and completion of the General Education requirement in Foundations of Learning II.C., Humanities required for nonmajors.

Description: This course will introduce you to Jewish history, culture, theology and practice. We will examine the biblical roots of modern Jewish beliefs, rabbinic Judaism, the basic movements within modern Judaism, the Jewish calendar and the Jewish life cycle. We will make use of a variety of different sources in our investigation including the required textbook, the Hebrew Bible, Jewish literature and films. The class format will include lectures, discussions and screenings and will require intensive reading.

Goals: In this course we will study and discuss the historical development of Judaism, including periods of radical development, as well as exploring the contemporary expressions of Jewish ritual, belief and identity:

1. Gain a general overview of the historical development of Judaism from its inception through the present;
2. Understand how Judaism adapted through the enlightenment, emancipation and the twentieth century;
3. Gain an introductory awareness of Jewish rituals and celebrations.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the semester, the successful student in this course will be able to:
1. Identify the major epochs of Jewish history;
2. Discuss the significant historic challenges and adaptations through which Judaism has evolved;
3. Identify expressions of Jewish theology and the boundaries of such theologies;
4. Define a set of roughly 100 key terms related to Judaism;
5. Present cogent analysis of the major expressions of modern Judaism;

Readings: The following texts are required for this course and are available for purchase in the University bookstore:
1. Eliezer Segal, Introducing Judaism (Routledge)
2. Chaim Potok, The Chosen (Random House)
Additional materials will be made available through the Blackboard site. The following Bible is recommended but not required:

*TANAKH: The Holy Scriptures* (Jewish Publication Society)

Readings for each lecture are listed on this syllabus. Please read the assignment in the texts **BEFORE** you come to class. Bring your books to class, we will discuss and analyze this material in the lecture.

**Papers:** There will be two written assignments for Judaism 320.

**Synagogue Visit:** All students will visit a local synagogue and write a short paper about their experience. The write-up is due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, March 22.

**Term Paper:** Students will write a 4-6 page paper responding to one of a series of essay questions distributed in class or a topic of their choosing (with approval by the professor). The Term Paper is due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, April 28.

**Quizzes:** There will be at least one quiz in class each week, and sometimes two. The quiz must be completed in class, and there will be no makeup quizzes. The quizzes usually will be based on the readings for that day. **This course will utilize Top Hat technology for in-class quizzes. Each student is required to register at tophet.com/register/student/. The course code for this course is: 543544. You must be enrolled in Top Hat before class on Tuesday, January 27. Students who miss more than 20% of the quizzes will have their semester grade lowered by one complete letter grade.**

**Class Participation:** Students are expected to attend lectures having completed the readings assigned for that day and to participate in class discussions. Attendance will be taken through Top Hat and quizzes.

**Midterm Exams** There will be a Midterm Exam on Thursday, March 26. The students are responsible for all material covered in class and in the readings.

**Final Exam/Oral Presentation:** Students will be required to make an Oral Presentation as their Final Exam, and to critique, respond to other students’ presentations.

**Grading:** Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

- Synagogue Visit 15%
- Midterm Exam 20%
- Term Paper 20%
- Final Exam/Presentation 20%
- Quizzes 15%
- Class Participation 10%
You will be assigned a letter grade for this course according to the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82-88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>72-78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68-70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>62-68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dates of all topics, exams and papers are listed on the Class Schedule. All exams, class participation and papers must be completed in order to receive a grade in this class. There will be no make-up exams or writing assignment extensions. Should you have a family or medical emergency, please notify me as soon as possible.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

**Note Well:** This course is *not* a religiously oriented “Bible Study.” It is *not* appropriate to use this class as a forum for debating your own personal ideas about religion, the Bible, God, heaven or hell. There are appropriate times and places for such discussion, REL S 100 is *not* one of them. The Bible provokes strong feelings from many people; nevertheless, we will set personal feelings aside in the interest of academic exploration and discovery.

**Final Note:** There may well be changes to this Syllabus and the Schedule of Readings during the semester. All changes will be announced in class, emailed to students and posted on Blackboard.

*Syllabus version 5a, revised January 16, 2015.*