During the two thousand years of Diaspora, Judaism has greatly influenced western civilization. This impact ranges from the historically monumental belief in monotheism (Christianity, Islam) to the love of the written word heard throughout the world in hundreds of songs written by Jews. This class will examine some of the most important and influential aspects of Judaism and Jewish culture that have had an impact on western culture. For such a small nation of people (13 million living outside of Israel) the Jews’ ability to affect so many others is disproportionately incredible.

This course is one of four Foundations courses that you will take in the area of Humanities and Fine Arts. Upon completing of this area of Foundations, you will be able to: 1) analyze written, visual, or performed texts in the humanities and fine arts with sensitivity to their diverse cultural contexts and historical moments; 2) describe various aesthetic and other value systems and the ways they are communicated across time and cultures; 3) identify issues in the humanities that have personal and global relevance; 4) demonstrate the ability to approach complex problems and ask complex questions drawing upon knowledge of the humanities.


COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To develop intellectual skills of reading, analyzing and discussing key facts about Jewish history and culture that have had major influences on many aspects of Western culture and history.

2. To introduce students to a variety of learning processes—inductive and deductive-- and to assist students in developing facility in using these processes.

3. To introduce students to the mediums of literature, music and film and how all are essential in helping to decipher some of the key points in the 5000 years of Jewish heritage.
4. To acquaint students with the beliefs, practices and cultural influences of Judaism and how they coincide or enlighten the students about their own beliefs and cultural history.

5. 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 or 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.

YOUR GRADE

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

- Quizzes: 25%
- Mid-term Exam: 25%
- Class Participation: 15%
- Final Exam: 35%

MORE THAN 2 ABSENCES WITHOUT AN EXCUSE OR DISCUSSING IT WITH ME WILL BE AN AUTOMATIC DECREASE OF A GRADE, FOR EXAMPLE FROM a “B” to a “B -.” If a mid-term or final is a day late the grade will automatically be reduced by half.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

- Turn off your cell phones BEFORE you enter class.
- There is NO TEXTING in class.
- Arrive on time and don’t leave early unless absolutely necessary.
- Be respectful of your colleagues and don’t get in the way of people who want to learn.
- Resist the temptation to do something other than giving the class your full attention.
- Inform me about any consistently aggravating classroom disruptions.
- Use of laptops ONLY if you are taking notes.

Jan. 26: The Covenant as a Model for Western Governance. (Reading from Patai)

Feb. 2: Israel and Canaan/Jews and Hellenes (Reading from Patai)

Feb. 9: Kabbalah and Its Influence on Western New Age Philosophies. (Reading from Patai)

Feb. 16: Sephardic History and Culture in the Golden Age of Spain. (Readings from Patai and Gerber)
Feb. 23: **QUIZ 1 in class.** Jewish Dionysians: The Khasidim (*Readings from Patai, Rabinowicz*)

March 2: Jewish Dionysians: The Khasidim (*Readings from Patai, Rabinowicz, Strom*)

March 9: The Holocaust (*film screening*) (*Reading the entire book “Kindertransport”*)

March 16: The Impact of the Holocaust on the World’s View of Genocide (*various readings*)

(MID-TERM DUE) *The mid-term will be an 8 page (this includes the bibliography) double-spaced research paper that examines one of the topics we have covered already in class but more in depth. Please email the paper to me in WORD DOCUMENT to my email address.*

March 23: **QUIZ 2 in class.** Jewish Radicalism (The Bund, Socialist Zionism, etc.) and its Influence on the Development of Socialism in Europe and America and on the Labor Movement (unions) in the United States. (*Reading from Howe*)

March 30: NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

April 6: The Influence of Jewish Comedians on Television and Film. (Marx Brothers, Milton Berle, Jack Benny, Fanny Brice, Woody Allen, et al) **A film will be screened.** (*Readings from Buhel and Merwin*)

April 13: The Influence of Jewish culture on the film industry. (Goldwyn, Laemmle, Spielberg, Selznik) (*Readings from Baron, Insdorf*)

April 20: The Interplay between Jewish Klezmer Musicians (Ziggy Elman, Nat Farber, Sam Muziker, Dave Tarras etc.) and Their Swing/Jazz Counterparts and the Influence on American Jazz (Sidney Bechet, Cab Calloway, etc.) (*Reading from Strom*)

April 22: Extra Credit: Concert in Smith Hall at 7pm “My Yidishe Mambo: Jews and Latin Rhythms” featuring Yale Strom & Hot Pstromi


May 4: Portrait of the Artist as Jew. Jewish artists (Marc Chagall, Maury Goltlieb, Amedeo Modigliani, Felix Nussbaum, Camille Pissaro, Charlotte Salomon, Ben Shahn, Raphael Soyer) and their influence on painting styles and history. (*Reading from Kirshenblatt-Gimblett*)

May 11: **Quiz 3 in class.** **FINAL PAPER DUE.** *The final will be a 10 page (this includes the bibliography) double-spaced research paper that examines one of the topics we have covered already in class since the mid-term, but more in depth. Please email the paper to me in WORD DOCUMENT form to my email address.*

**ALL MID-TERMS AND FINALS SHOULD BE SENT TO ME VIA THE INTERNET. WORD DOC . OR IN THE BODY OF YOUR EMAIL TO ME.**