Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies  
Spring 2012 Courses

IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FILM

JWST W4101 Israeli Film  
Call Number: 17654  Points: 3  
Day/Time: M 6:00pm-10:00pm  Location: 301M Fayerweather  
Instructor: Avner Faingulernt

The aim of this class is to question and analyze the main thrust and thematic evolution of Israeli documentary cinema since 1960. The course will attempt to draw a portrait of Israel as seen through a collection of films. It will focus on the major conflicts that the new state of Israel and its society confronted and confront and how these conflicts expose the unconscious streams of identity within a society in conflict with itself.

IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

HIST W3611 Jews & Judaism in Antiquity  
Call Number: 87042  Points: 3  
Day/Time: MW 9:10am-10:25am  Location: TBD  
Instructor: Seth Schwartz

This course surveys the history of the Jews and Judaism from Cyrus the Great until the Muslim Conquest. It will focus on hellenization, the emergence of sectarianism, the beginnings of Christianity and of Rabbinic Judaism, and the crisis precipitated by the arrival of Rome.

HIST W4615 Tradition: Growing Up in the Shtetl  
Call Number: 11501  Points: 4  
Day/Time: R 11:00am-12:50pm  Location: 302 Fayerweather  
Instructor: David Assaf

The seminar will focus on traditional Jewish life, in the Eastern European towns known as shtetlekh, from the early modern period until late 19th century. Through study of various primary sources, mainly memoirs, autobiographies, stories and poetry, we will portray the everyday life, especially childhood and adolescence, and the confrontation between tradition and modernity.

HIST G8612 Hasidism in the Eyes of Opponents  
Call Number: 63146  Points: 4  
Day/Time: R 2:10pm-4:00pm  Location: 302 Fayerweather  
Instructor: David Assaf

The colloquium will look closely at the historical Hasidic movement, its doctrine, innovations and the nature of their leaders through the eyes of their ardent opponents. The religious and social confrontation between Hasidim and other circles of Eastern European Jewish traditional society, whether the Lithuanian Mitnagedim or the Galician Maskilim, will be studied in light of the
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MIDDLE EAST AND ASIAN LITERATURES AND CULTURES

MDES W1511 1st Year Modern Hebrew: Elementary II
Section 001:
Call Number: 26348 Points: 5
Day/Time: MTWR 9:10am-10:15am Location: 114 Knox Hall
Instructor: Zipora Rubin
Section 002:
Call Number: 27947 Points: 5
Day/Time: MTWR 12:00pm-1:05pm Location: 325 Pupin Laboratories
Instructor: Rina Kreitman

Prerequisite MDES W1510 or the equivalent: based on performance on the placement test. Continued introduction to Hebrew, with equal emphasis on all languages skills.

MDES W1513 2nd Year Modern Hebrew: Intermediate II
Section 001:
Call Number: 24780 Points: 5
Day/Time: MTWR 8:45am-9:50am Location: 103 Knox Hall
Instructor: Michal Nachmany
Section 002:
Call Number: 60822 Points: 5
Day/Time: MTWR 10:35am-11:40am Location: 313 Pupin Laboratories
Instructor: Rina Kreitman
Section 003:
Call Number: 29607 Points: 5
Day/Time: MTWR 12:00pm-1:05pm Location: 411 Hamilton Hall
Instructor: Nehama Bersohn

Prerequisite MDES W1512: Equal emphasis is given to all language skills. Irregular categories of the Hebrew verb, prepositions and syntax are taught systematically. Vocabulary building. Daily homework includes grammar exercises, short answers, reading, or writing short compositions. Frequent vocabulary and grammar quizzes. (Students completing this course fulfill Columbia College and Barnard language requirement.)

MDES W1516 Intermediate Hebrew: Intensive Grammar Review
Call Number: 81761 Points: 4
Day/Time: MTWR 1:10pm-2:00pm Location: 101 Knox Hall
Instructor: Zipora Rubin

For advanced students with a Hebrew school background, who wish to review, systematize and expand their knowledge of the language through an intensive study of grammar, especially the Hebrew verb system. Readings include selections from Modern Hebrew literary and journalistic texts. Discussion and
compositions in Hebrew. Students placed in this course have to take only one semester to fulfill their college language requirement in Hebrew.

**MDES W4511 3rd Year Modern Hebrew II**
Call Number: 77034  Points: 4
Day/Time: TR 10:00am-11:50am  Location: 410 Knox Hall
Instructor: Nehama Bersohn

Prerequisites MDES W4510 or MDES W1515 or the instructor's permission: Focus on transition from basic language towards authentic Hebrew, through reading of un-adapted literary and journalistic texts without vowels. Vocabulary building. Grammar is reviewed in context. A weekly hour is devoted to practice in conversation. Daily homework includes reading, short answers, short compositions, listening to web-casts, or giving short oral presentations via voice e-mail. Frequent vocabulary quizzes.

**MDES W3541 Zionism: A Cultural Perspective**
Call Number: 11787  Points: 3
Day/Time: MW 2:40pm-3:55pm  Location: 516 Hamilton
Instructor: Dan Miron

The course, based on Zionist texts of various kinds, will offer a view of Zionism as a cultural revolution aimed at redefining Judaism and the Jewish Identity.

**CLME G6530 Dynamics of Israeli Culture**
Call Number: 81784  Points: 3
Day/Time: T 9:00am-10:50am  Location: 201D Philosophy
Instructor: Dan Miron

Sh. Y. Agnon - the Early Work (1908-1931). This graduate seminar will focus on Agnon's search for his own literary voice against the background of the poetic options Hebrew prose fiction of the beginning of the twentieth-century offered. Agnon's "dialogues" with I.L Peretz, M.J. Berdichevsky, J.H. Brenner, U.N. Gnessin as well as his attitude toward contemporary European Realism, Impressionism, and Symbolism, will be explored. Among the texts which will be analyzed: Agunot, The Good Years, Nights, Miriam's Well, The Crooked Shall Be Made Straight, The Tale of the Scribe, The Banished One, In the Prime of her Life, Ovadia the Cripple, Poland, With Our Young and with Our Old, and The Bridal Canopy.

**IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

**PHIL V3910 Maimonides and Spinoza**
Call Number: 23384  Points: 3
Day/Time: M 11:00am-12:50pm  Location: 513 Fayerweather
Instructor: Zev Harvey

The *Guide of the Perplexed*, written in Arabic by Moses Maimonides (1138-1204), is the most influential book in medieval Jewish philosophy. It is a difficult but enchanting book, composed in the form of a puzzle. It had a formative influence on Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), whose early reading in philosophy was in Jewish texts and who read the *Guide* in Hebrew translation. We shall read Maimonides’ *Guide*
together with Spinoza’s *Theological- Political Treatise* and his *Ethics*, both written in Latin. Our focus will be on Spinoza’s use and criticism of Maimonidean themes. All texts will be read in English translation.

**PHIL G4095 Medieval Hebrew Philosophic Texts**  
Call Number: 67002  Points: 3  
Day/Time: M 4:10pm-6:00pm  Location: 513 Fayerweather  
Instructor: Zev Harvey

This course will discuss readings from major medieval Hebrew philosophic works. We will look at Maimonides’ (1138-1204) *Book of Knowledge*, his systematic presentation of the foundations of religion, science, law, and ethics; Shemtob Falaquera’s (c. 1225-1295) *Epistle of the Debate*, a lively philosophic dialogue between a philosopher and a fundamentalist; *Wars of the Lord* by Levi Gersonides (1288-1344), the most important Jewish Aristotelian after Maimonides; *Light of the Lord* by Hasdai Crescas (c. 1340-1410/11), the most important Jewish anti-Aristotelian; and finally *Book of Principles* by Joseph Albo (d. after 1433). Discussions will be based on the original Hebrew texts, but readings are also available in English translation.

**IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION**

**RELI W4807 Divine Human Animal**  
Call Number: 60530  Points: 4  
Day/Time: R 2:10pm-4:00pm  Location: 602 Northwest Co  
Instructor: Jonathan Schorsch

This seminar offers coverage of an increasingly popular and important perspective on the construction of culture and the definition of the human, by means of animals. Taking a more or less historical approach, the course will focus on "thinking with" animals (in Levi-Strauss’s phrasing) through the lens of the religious imagination. The concentration will be primarily on "Western" religious cultures, especially Judaism and questions of Jewishness.

**RELI W4812 Angels and Demons**  
Call Number: 64691  Points: 4  
Day/Time: T 2:10pm-4:00pm  Location: 602 Northwest Co  
Instructor: Jonathan Schorsch

Angels and demons -- and similar intermediary beings -- comprise a prominent and ubiquitous feature of the cultures influenced by the three major monotheisms, as well as of the cultures influenced by other spiritual traditions. With a focus on Jewish, Christian and post-religious environments of "The West," this seminar explores the history of angels and demons, and their changing theological meanings, psychological and cultural roles. We will first survey selected traditional sources from the ancient, medieval and early modern eras -- theology, mysticism, magic, politics.
YIDD W1102 Elementary Yiddish II

Section 001:
Call Number: 63442  Points: 4
Day/Time: TRF 10:35am-11:50am  Location: 315 Hamilton
Instructor: Miriam Hoffman

Section 002:
Call Number: 23442  Points: 4
Day/Time: TRF 2:40pm-3:55pm  Location: 406 Hamilton
Instructor: