



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE FOR ISRAEL AND JEWISH STUDIES

Special Concentration in Jewish Studies

Program Office:
511 Fayerweather Hall
212-854-2581

Program Website:
iij.s.columbia.edu/undergraduate



COLUMBIA | GS
School of General Studies

Special Concentration in Jewish Studies

What is Jewish Studies?

The academic discipline of Jewish studies is an interdisciplinary field centered on the analysis and investigation of Jewish history, religion, language, and literature. The discipline ranges from the study of Jews and Judaism in antiquity to the present day. It explores Judaism not only as a religion, but as a civilization and culture.

The Special Concentration

A special concentration in Jewish studies is available for undergraduate students at Columbia College and the School of General Studies. The special concentration will allow students to draw upon classes in a wide range of departments across the university, including History, Sociology, MESAAS, Germanic Languages and Literature, and Religion. The program requirements for the special concentration are designed to provide Columbia students with the interdisciplinary knowledge necessary to study Jewish civilization both broadly and deeply.

The roots of Judaism lie deeper than one region, gender, language, or culture; and by studying the interconnectedness of these areas, the depth of student understanding across a range of spheres and disciplines will greatly increase. The special concentration in Jewish studies will enhance the current scholarly programs, adding to current Jewish studies courses' vitality as students will come to each course with a deeper understanding and background based on their complementary coursework.

Program of Study

The special concentration in Jewish studies is not a stand-alone concentration. In order to graduate, a student must complete a concentration or major in addition to the requirements of the special concentration. Students wishing to complete a special concentration in Jewish studies will work with a program advisor to decide upon course selection and sequencing. The program office will provide and keep on record a planning form to track the fulfillment of requirements for the special concentration.

How to Undertake a Special Concentration in Jewish Studies

The first step is to e-mail Sheridan Gayer, IJS Assistant Director, at sjg41@columbia.edu to let us know of your interest. We will add you to the Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies listserv so you can learn about upcoming events and programming. We will also set up a meeting and, if necessary, another advisor from the program, based on your specific interests. Students should always consult with their advisor at Columbia College or the School of General Studies to

ensure that they are making satisfactory progress toward general core requirements while pursuing the special concentration.

Beyond the Classroom

In addition to coursework, students are encouraged to take advantage of the many resources available at Columbia. By attending lectures and career panels, becoming active in student organizations, and pursuing internship opportunities, students will gain broad perspectives on Jewish studies and gather ideas on shaping their future goals. The Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies holds special events for undergraduates throughout the year and may also be able to offer research assistant positions.

Online Resources

- [Course Planning Form](#)
- [Special Concentration Declaration Form](#)
- [Opportunities for Students Outside the Classroom](#)
- [Information on Study Abroad](#)

For more information on the special concentration in Jewish studies, please contact:

Sheridan Gayer

E-mail: sjg41@columbia.edu

Phone: 212-854-2581

Undergraduate Requirements for a Special Concentration in Jewish Studies

The special concentration in Jewish studies is designed for students who wish to gain a broad-based knowledge of Jewish studies. It enables undergraduates to acquire a background in the most important aspects of Jewish culture, religion, civilization, and history in an interdisciplinary setting.

For a special concentration in Jewish studies, students are required to complete a minimum of 21 points. Within these points, at least one course must be taken from three of the focus areas listed below. Credits for language courses may constitute at most 10 points, and one year of Hebrew or Yiddish language is strongly recommended. A minimum of 18 points must be taken in residence or as part of an approved study abroad program (unless equivalent courses are not offered within the College, as determined by the faculty advisor).

Focus Areas:

1. Bible and Rabbinics/Ancient Judaism

- Religion V3512 The Bible and Its Interpreters
- Religion W4537 Talmudic Narrative
- Religion W4520 Patriarchal/Rabbinic Authority in Antiquity
- Religion V3501 Hebrew Bible
- Religion V3508 Judaism in the Time of Jesus
- Religion V3561 Classics of Judaism
- Religion V2510 Jews and Judaism in Antiquity
- Religion W4535 Ancient Jewish Texts
- Religion V3850 Life after Death

2. Medieval Judaism

- History W3657 Medieval Jewish Cultures
- History W3616 Jews/Christians in the Medieval World
- Religion W4510 The Thought of Maimonides
- Religion V3870 Inquisitions, Christians/Empire
- Religion W4515 Jews in the Later Roman Empire
- History W4180 Conversion in Historical Perspective

3. Modern Judaism

- History W3604 Modern Jewish History
- History W3630 American Jewish History
- History W4602 Jews in 19th Century France
- Religion V3571 Judaism, Jewishness, Modernity
- Middle East W3542 Introduction to Israeli Literature
- Yiddish W3500 Survey of Yiddish Literature

Yiddish W3800 Readings in Yiddish Literature
Yiddish G4200 America in Yiddish, Yiddish in America
Yiddish G4550 Yiddish Theater
History W4546- Spinoza-Sabbatai: Jews in Early Europe

4. Israeli Society

Middle East W3542 Introduction to Israeli Literature
Middle East G4542 The Culture of Israeli Cinema
Middle East W3541 Zionism: A Cultural Perspective
Middle East G4521 Post War Israel
History W3633 – Zionism & the State of Israel
Sociology G4407 Dynamics of Israeli Society
Sociology V2310 Israeli Society
Middle East G4524 Hebrew Love
Religion W4513 Homeland, Diasporas, Promised Land

5. Gender and Judaism

History W3640 Jewish Women and Family 1000-1800
Religion V4502 Jewish Rites: Gender & Power
Religion V3570 Women/Judaism: Folklore or Religion
History W443 Women in Jewish Mystical Movements
Religion W4504 The Patriarchal and Matriarchal Stories in Genesis

6. Jewish History and Culture

Music G4125 Jewish Music: Uniqueness and Diversity
Art History W3827 Tracing Identities: Jewish Art from Antiquity to the Present
Religion V3585 The Sephardic Experience
Religion W4503 Readings from Sephardic Diaspora
Religion V2505 Judaism
Religion W4511 Jewish Ethics
Yiddish W3500 Survey of Yiddish Literature
Yiddish G4550 Yiddish Theater
History W3657 Medieval Jewish Cultures
History W4645 Spinoza to Sabbatai Zevi: Jews in Early Modern Europe
Middle East G4542 The Culture of Israeli Cinema
Middle East W3542 Introduction to Israeli Literature

7. Jewish Literature

Yiddish W3500 Survey of Yiddish Literature
Yiddish W3800 Readings in Yiddish Literature
Religion V3561 Classics of Judaism
Religion V3512 The Bible and Its Interpreters
Religion W4537 Talmudic Narrative
Religion W4535 Ancient Jewish Texts

Religion W4510 The Thought of Maimonides
Middle East W3542 Introduction to Israeli Literature
Middle East G4524 Hebrew Love
Religion W4504 The Patriarchal and Matriarchal Stories in Genesis
Middle East G4523 Introduction to Hebrew Literature

8. Jewish Language

Middle East W1510 1st Year Modern Hebrew: Elem I
Middle East W1511 1st Year Modern Hebrew: Elem II
Middle East W1512 2nd Year Modern Hebrew: Inter I
Middle East W1513 2nd Year Modern Hebrew: Inter II
Middle East W1514 2nd Year Modern Hebrew: Upper Inter I
Middle East W1515 2nd Year Modern Hebrew: Upper Inter II
Middle East W4510 3rd Year Modern Hebrew I
Middle East W4511 3rd Year Modern Hebrew II
Middle East W4512 4th Year Modern Hebrew: Readings
Middle East W1516 Int Hebrew: Intensive Grammar Rev
Yiddish W1101 Elementary Yiddish I
Yiddish W1201 Intermediate Yiddish I
Yiddish W1102 Elementary Yiddish II
Yiddish W3333 Advanced Yiddish I
Yiddish W1202 Intermediate Yiddish II