History of the Hebrew Language
HEBR
Lecturer: Dr Lily Kahn
Credit value: 15

The Hebrew language has a rich and fascinating history dating back 3,000 years. Where does ancient Hebrew come from, and how did it become the language of the Bible and the Mishnah? What was the fate of Hebrew after it died out as a spoken language around 200 CE? What was its role in the medieval and early modern periods? Why were the tales of King Arthur and the plays of Shakespeare translated into Hebrew at this time, when no-one spoke the language? How was Hebrew revived as a spoken language in Palestine at the end of the 19th century? This course will address these questions and more by exploring the story of Hebrew from its beginnings in the Iron Age Near East to 21st-century Israel and beyond.

Assessment: Undergrad
CW Essay 1 (2,000 words) 50%
CW Essay 2 (2,000 words) 50%

Assessment: Postgrad
CW Essay 1 (2,500 words) 50%
CW Essay 2 (2,500 words) 50%

Israel & Palestine
HEBR
Lecturer: Dr Seth Anziska
Credit value: 15

This module will examine the history of Palestine and Israel from the nineteenth century until the present. Rather than studying Israeli and Palestinian history in isolation, the module explores the relationship between the two national groups and the emergence of the Israeli state alongside the prolonged statelessness of Palestinians. Some of the topics we will consider include contrasting narratives of Palestinian and Israeli history; the constituents of identity in late Ottoman Palestine and the formation of Palestinian and Israeli nationalism; Hebrew culture and the Arab encounter with Zionism; the impact of the Mandate period; the Arab revolt of 1936-39; the 1948 War and the birth of the Palestinian refugee problem; the political disappearance of the Palestinian question in Israel’s early decades; the rebuilding of Palestinian identity and institutions; and the fate of the two state solution.

Assessment: Undergrad
CW Essay 1 (2,000 words) 40%
CW Essay 2 (2,500 words) 60%

Assessment: Postgrad
CW Essay 1 (2,500 words) 40%
CW Essay 2 (3,000 words) 60%

The Historiography of the Holocaust: Graduate Seminar
HEBR
Lecturer: Prof Michael Berkowitz
Credit value: 15

The last decades have witnessed a proliferation of scholarship on the Holocaust, including work incorporating international perspectives and disciplines outside of history per se. In this course we shall pursue an intensive
examination of this historiography. We mainly seek to gain a sense of leading scholarship in the field, largely in the form of published monographs, as opposed to a survey of events and interpretations. We will examine selected historical syntheses and anthologies of both primary and secondary sources.

Students will be expected to read at least one entire book each week, and will prepare at least three class presentations on selected books.

Assessment: Postgrad
CW Essay 1 (2,500 words) 50%
CW Essay 2 (2,500 words) 50%

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**Introduction to Biblical Hebrew**

**HEBR0002 / HEBR0003**

**Lecturer:**

**Credit value:** 30 (15 Affiliate – 1 term)

Introduction to Biblical Hebrew is designed to familiarise complete beginners with biblical Hebrew language and literature in a lively and enjoyable manner. We use a textbook that includes fun stories, authentic biblical texts, vocabulary and grammar help, and many on-line learning aids, including audio.

By the end of the year you will have acquired a solid grounding in biblical Hebrew grammar and vocabulary and will have read an extensive range of fascinating biblical narratives, starting with the creation story and including some of the best-known biblical stories such as the flood, the tower of Babel, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the exodus from Egypt, Samuel and David, King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, Job, and more.

Assessment:
Undergrad
EXAM Unseen three-hour written examination 40%
CW Coursework 60%

Postgrad
EXAM Unseen three-hour written examination 40%
CW Coursework 60%

Affiliate
CW Coursework 50%
TEST One test 50%

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**Beginners Modern Hebrew**

**HEBR0004 / HEBR0005**

**Lecturer:** Mrs Shoshana Sharpe

**Credit value:** 30 (15 Affiliate – 1 term)

Modern Hebrew is the language spoken in Israel today. This course is designed for students with no prior knowledge of the language.

Students will learn the Hebrew alphabet; they will learn to speak, listen, read and write. Basic vocabulary on a range of topics (e.g. home, family, daily activities, shops, classroom) will be rapidly acquired. Students will learn basic syntax and Hebrew grammar, including all three tenses of different verbs.

Teaching will be carried out mainly in Hebrew. The textbook used will be ‘Hebrew from Scratch’ (part 1). Students will be encouraged to use the facilities of the UCL Language Centre. At the end of the course, students will be able to communicate in Hebrew about everyday matters.

Assessment: Undergrad
EXAM Unseen three-hour written examination 35%

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Religion, State & Society in Modern European History
HEBR0006
Lecturer: Dr François Guesnet
Credit value: 15

How did the relationship between faith communities (Christianity, Islam, and Judaism), the state, and society at large change in European history since the early modern period? This course proposes to look into this dynamic from the Protestant Reformation to the rise of so-called Islamic State very recently.

We will reflect on
- changes in the role of religion itself
- confessional conflict and religious warfare
- secularisation, the Enlightenment, atheism
- the separation of faith communities and the state, as well as the establishment of religions
- the definition of religious fundamentalisms
- the impact of religious law (minority legal orders) on European legal systems
- the impact of religious commitment to political transformation
- the accommodation of religious diversity today, e.g. in education

The course combines an overall historical perspective with theoretical approaches including social sciences, (legal) philosophy, and anthropology. It should contribute to a critical and empathetic understanding of the complex European religious and secular legacies. It stimulates debate about past and current developments, integrating theoretical approaches and case studies. All readings provided will be in English, and no prior knowledge of the field is required.

Assessment: CW Quiz x4 (10% each) 40%
             CW Essay (2,500 words) 40%
             CW Slide Presentation 20%

Sources, Methods, Skills
HEBR0007
Lecturer: Dr François Guesnet
Credit value: 15

How can we approach Hebrew and Jewish Studies? What does it mean to study this topic as a critical thinker? This course offers a survey of the most relevant methods of academic inquiry and argument in an academic field. Students will be introduced to the traditions and practices of the historical method, literary criticism, the learning of languages, and the analysis of visual materials including film. We will hone skills for
undertaking written assignments as well as oral presentations, explore library resources and the appropriate use of the internet and online resources, and examine the ongoing transformation of academic research through digital humanities.

The class will be structured around discussions of selected primary source materials and secondary reading, as well as developing methodological approaches and assessing requirements in the above-mentioned disciplines. Students will gain familiarity and exposure to undergraduate level research and writing in Hebrew and Jewish Studies while broadly sharpening their critical faculties across the humanities and social sciences. We will also consider why this undertaking matters so much in our 21st century world.

Assessment:  
- **CW Essay one (1,500 words)** 35%  
- **CW Essay two (1,500 words)** 35%  
- **CW Five short assignments (600 words each)** 30%

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**Survey of Jewish History 1: The Ancient and Medieval Near East**  
**HEBR0011**  
Lecturer: Prof Mark Geller  
Credit value: 15

Some of the topics covered in this course are:  
- historiographical problems of the birth of Ancient Israel  
- concepts of kingship, prophecy, cult and divinity  
- the protagonists of Jewish history (including Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Zealots)  
- the contribution of archaeology to our understanding of history  
- transformation of Jewish society and culture under Christian and Islamic rule

Assessment:  
- **CW Essay one (1,500 words)** 40%  
- **CW Essay two (2,000 words)** 40%  
- **EXAM In-class examination** 20%

*Please note that students will also be expected to do a literature review.*

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**Survey of Jewish History 2: From Medieval to Early Modern Europe**  
**HEBR0012**  
Lecturer: Prof Michael Berkowitz  
Credit value: 15

A great deal of what is considered essentially "Jewish" derives from the medieval and the early modern periods—from roughly the year 1000 to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In that time it became meaningful to think and speak about European Jewry as a distinct entity. Jewish communities within formative nations, such as Poland, Lithuania, Spain and Portugal, the German States, and the Ottoman Empire developed particular trends and counter-trends, under Christendom and Islam. Characteristics of gender and class conventions became institutionalized and changed over time. It also was a period in which we observe the emergence of ways of rejecting, resisting, and keeping Jews distant from the non-Jewish majority cultures and distinct interest groups. Our main concern will be the ways that Jews, as a people and communities of faith (combined with ethnic identity) attempted to adjust to changing times and conditions. Jews repeatedly confronted the dilemma of how to respond to unprecedented situations, which prompted the intercession of figures such as Rashi, Maimonides, Spinoza, and Mendelssohn, and we shall investigate consequential events such as the Inquisition, the rise and demise of mystical messianism, and the Jewish variety of the Enlightenment.

This is an introductory course that does not assume any previous experience with the subject.
Introduction to the Study of Judaism  
HEBR0014  
Lecturer: Prof Willem Smelik  
Credit value: 15

What is Judaism? Since Judaism has a history spanning more than three millennia and all five continents, it inevitably means different things to different people. The academic study of Judaism tries to answer the question by focusing on Jewish practice, tradition, and history with a variety of perspectives:

– The definition of Judaism: is it a religion, culture, or ethnicity? Is it monolithic, essential, and static, or rather diverse, hybrid, and dynamic?
– What are the texts and practices that ‘define’ Judaism?
– What are the central concepts of rabbinic Judaism? How does rabbinic legal text and reasoning work?
– What are the places and shapes of Jewish worship?
– How do tradition and modernization make their mark felt in the history of Judaism, from Antiquity to the present day?
– How does Judaism interact with other religions?
– Which are the contemporary ways of connecting with the Jewish tradition?

This introductory course is open to first and second year students, and to affiliate students. No prior knowledge of either Judaism or any Jewish language is required.

Objectives:

– To have a grasp of the academic definitions of religion and ethnicity;
– To understand the basic texts, practices and tenets of traditional Judaism;
– To know the historical varieties of Judaism then and now.

Assessment: 

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Introduction to Jewish Philosophy and Mysticism  
HEBR0017  
Lecturer: Dr Tali Loewenthal  
Credit value: 15

This course will provide an overview of the thought and works of some of the most important philosophers and mystical thinkers in Jewish history. The following famous Jewish philosophers will be covered:

– Philo and Saadia Gaon  
– Judah Halevi  
– Maimonides  
– Moses Mendelssohn

On the mystical side:
• Mysticism in the Bible and Talmud
• The significance of the Zohar
• German Pietists of the 13th Century
• The Safed School in the 16th Century
• The Maharal of Prague and the Shelah (R. Yeshaya Horowitz)
• Hasidic and Mitnaggedic Mysticism

Movements to be covered will include:
• Kabbalah
• Hasidism
• Haskalah
• Musar
• Contemporary movements of Jewish spirituality

Assessment:
CW Essay one (2,000 words) 50%
CW Essay two (2,000 words) 50%

Intermediate Biblical Hebrew
HEBR0018 / HEBR0019

Lecturer:  Dr Tali Loewenthal
Credit value:  30 (15 Affiliate – 1 term)
Prerequisite:  Introduction to Biblical Hebrew

Intermediate Biblical Hebrew is a continuation of Introduction to Biblical Hebrew. We cover more advanced points of biblical Hebrew syntax, including the various uses of the definite article and the construct chain, the functions of the verbal forms, and the structure of different types of clauses. Students put this knowledge to use by translating biblical texts from Hebrew to English and from English to Hebrew with a focus on linguistic analysis. This practice finely hones students’ knowledge of Hebrew grammar, expands their vocabulary, and provides comprehensive experience in the close reading and translation of a wide range of biblical texts.

Some of the biblical texts likely to be studied include:
• Genesis 1 (the creation story)
• Exodus 20 (the Ten Commandments)
• Exodus 32 (the golden calf)
• Joshua 6 (the walls of Jericho)
• Judges 4 (Deborah and Jael)
• Ezekiel 37 (the vision of the dry bones)

Assessment: Undergrad  EXAM Unseen three-hour written examination 50%
CW Coursework 50%
Assessment: Postgrad  EXAM Unseen three-hour written examination 50%
CW Coursework 50%
Assessment: Affiliate  CW One essay 50%
TEST One test 50%

Moses Maimonides in Jewish Thought and History
HEBR0021 / HEBR0022

Lecturer:  Dr Tali Loewenthal
Credit value:  30 (15 Affiliate – 1 term)
Have you heard of Moses Maimonides (1135-1204)? He is one of the most famous but also paradoxical figures in Jewish thought and history. We explore his main works using English translations. No prior knowledge is needed.

Who was the real Maimonides? The author of *Mishneh Torah* (‘Repetition of the Law’) which is the most complete and organised encyclopedia of Jewish Law ever written? Or the author of *Guide for the Perplexed* which encourages a philosophical approach to Judaism and life? Further, why do contrasting Jewish movements through the ages all claim his as their own, such as, in our own time, both Reform and Habad?

The course will include:

- the way he combined Law and Philosophic quest in a unique way
- his response to the crisis of widespread forced conversion to Islam
- his ‘Thirteen Principles of Jewish Faith’
- the controversies about him
- his *Guide for the Perplexed*. Is it teaching cold rationalism or intense love of the Divine?
- his universalism, speaking to both Jew and non-Jew

This course helps one understand what Judaism is about, as seen through the eyes of one of its most remarkable exponents.

Assessment: UG

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Assessment: Affiliate

| CW           | Essay (3,500 words)                  | 100% |

**Modern Hebrew – Lower Intermediate**

**HEBR0023 / HEBR0024**

Lecturer: Mrs Shoshana Sharpe  
Credit value: 30 (15 Affiliate – 1 term)  
Prerequisite: Modern Hebrew for Beginners

Lower Intermediate Modern Hebrew will enable students to develop the following Modern Hebrew knowledge and skills:

- Fluent and more accurate use of vocabulary and basic grammatical structures.
- Expanded vocabulary, relevant to a range of everyday topics and situations.
- Ability to engage in more involved written and spoken communication, such as expressing and understanding feelings and opinions.
- Ability to read Israeli newspapers and literature.

This course is equivalent to Ulpan level 2. The textbook used will be *Hebrew from Scratch* (part 2). Students will be expected to use a Hebrew/English English/Hebrew dictionary as well as verb tables. They will be encouraged to use the facilities of the UCL Language Centre.

Assessment: Undergrad

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Assessment: Postgrad

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Modern Hebrew - Higher Intermediate
HEBR0025 / HEBR0026
Lecturer: Dr Rina Kreitman
Credit value: 30 (15 Affiliate – 1 term)
Prerequisite: Modern Hebrew - Lower Intermediate

Higher Intermediate Modern Hebrew will enable students to express themselves fluently in Modern Hebrew, as well as to read Israeli newspapers and literature. The following areas will be covered in the course:

* Reading comprehension
* Writing skills
* Conversation skills, through class discussions of a variety of topics
* Listening comprehension
* Modern Hebrew grammar, concentrating on the full range of Hebrew verbal forms

This course is equivalent to Ulpan level 3. The textbooks used will be ‘Succeed in Hebrew’ (Lehatzlach be-Ivrit) part 3, and ‘Grammar Exercises – The Verb’ (Targiley Dikduk – Ha-Poal). Students will be expected to use a Hebrew/English English/Hebrew dictionary as well as verb tables. They will be encouraged to use the facilities of the UCL Language Centre.

Assessment: Undergrad
EXAM Unseen three-hour written examination 35%
CW Coursework 45%
ORAL Oral Examination 20%

Assessment: Postgrad
EXAM Unseen three-hour written examination 35%
CW Coursework 45%
ORAL Oral Examination 20%

Assessment: Affiliate
CW One essay 50%
TEST One test 50%

Advanced Modern Hebrew
HEBR0027/ HEBR0028
Lecturer: Dr Rina Kreitman
Credit value: 30 (15 Affiliate – 1 term)
Prerequisite: Modern Hebrew - Higher Intermediate

Advanced Modern Hebrew will enable students to develop further their reading, writing and oral fluency and skills. The following areas will be covered in the course:

* Reading comprehension including newspapers, academic and non-academic texts.
* Writing skills.
• Class discussions of a variety of topics and extra-curricular sessions.

• Listening comprehension – students will listen to audio recordings and will watch Israeli television programmes, films and documentaries.

This course is equivalent to Ulpan level 4. The textbooks used will be ‘Ivrit me-Alef ad Tav’ level4/5, and ‘Tachbir le-Mitkadmim’. Students will be expected to use a Hebrew/English English/Hebrew dictionary as well as verb tables. They will be encouraged to use the facilities of the UCL Language Centre.

Assessment: Undergrad
EXAM Unseen three-hour written examination 35%
CW Coursework 45%
ORAL Oral Examination 20%

Assessment: Postgrad
EXAM Unseen three-hour written examination 35%
CW Coursework 45%
ORAL Oral Examination 20%

Assessment: Affiliate
CW One essay 50%
TEST One test 50%

Ancient Jewish Magic
HEBR0034
Lecturer: Prof Mark Geller
Credit value: 15

In this course the variety of ancient Jewish magic will be explored from the Second Temple period to Late Antiquity. The types of magic (amulets, incantation bowls, and recipes), their recipes and uses, as well as early rabbinic views on magic will be discussed. All texts will be supplied in the English translation.

Assessment: Undergrad
CW Weekly coursework 50%
CW Essay (4,000 words) 50%

Assessment: Postgrad
CW Weekly coursework 50%
CW Essay (4,000 words) 50%

Syriac
HEBR0038 / HEBR0036
Lecturer: Gillian Greenberg
Credit value: 30 (15 Affiliate – 1 term)

Syriac, the Aramaic dialect originating in Edessa (today’s Urfa, in SE Turkey) at around the turn of the eras, is important for both Jews and Christians.

For most Christians, its main interest is that it is still used in the liturgy of the Syriac Orthodox Church and certain other communities, members of whose diasporas are spread world-wide. The early literature is vast, and is important for those interested in the history of eastern Christianity.

For Jews, there are two main fields of interest - (i) as part of the background to the early development of Judaism; and (ii) the Syriac translation of the Hebrew Bible. This was written early in the CE; this Version, the Peshitta, was probably begun by Jews, and completed by Jewish converts to Christianity. It is close to the Hebrew Bible, but there are interesting differences, from which we may learn about translation technique, scribal practice, and the transmission of the Hebrew Bible itself.
Most students know no Syriac when we begin. The aim of the course is that, by the end, students will be sufficiently competent to read a Syriac text independently. Each week, we study some grammar, and building on that we also always read some original text. The texts cover a wide range, secular, pagan, Jewish, and Christian.

Knowledge of other Semitic languages is helpful but not essential.

Assessment: Undergrad TEST Three departmental tests (each worth 33.3%) 100%
Assessment: Postgrad EXAM Unseen three-hour written examination 100%
Assessment: Affiliate TEST One test (Departmentally managed) 100%

Elementary Yiddish
HEBR0041 / HEBR0042
Lecturer: Dr Sima Beeri
Credit value: 30 (15 Affiliate – 1 term)

Learn to speak, read, write and understand Yiddish quicker than you can imagine! The course is for complete beginners.

Yiddish was the vernacular language of East-European Jews (Ashkenazim) and spoken by the majority of Jews prior to the Second World War. It is a Germanic language with significant Hebrew and Slavic components and with a vast literature. This is a chance to engage with this rich culture and its fascinating history.

Each class incorporates grammar and new vocabulary linked to a variety of topics and readings. Texts will include simple dialogues and extracts from Yiddish folk culture as well as short easy literary pieces.

Conversation practice is a feature of each class.

UCL is the only university in London where Yiddish is taught.

Assessment: Undergrad EXAM Unseen three-hour written examination 35%
CW Coursework 45%
ORAL Orally assessed coursework 5%
ORAL Oral Examination 15%
Assessment: Postgrad EXAM Unseen three-hour written examination 35%
CW Coursework 45%
ORAL Orally assessed coursework 5%
ORAL Oral Examination 15%
Assessment: Affiliate CW One essay 50%
TEST One test 50%

Intermediate Yiddish
HEBR0043 / HEBR0044
Lecturer: Dr Helen Beer
Credit value: 30 (15 Affiliate – 1 term)
Prerequisite: Elementary Yiddish
For those who have completed Elementary Yiddish or equivalent, this is an opportunity to further develop your skills in Yiddish.

Each class is conducted in Yiddish and includes grammar, conversation and textual study with a focus on expanding abilities to speak, comprehend, read and write.

Students will engage with topical issues enhanced by Yiddish newspaper and journal articles. Readings will also introduce the rich field of Yiddish literature by engaging with modern poetry and short stories, and Yiddish folk culture.

This course offers an opportunity to expand skills enabling a deeper exploration of the cultural history of this fascinating language.

**Assessment:**

**Undergrad**
- EXAM: Unseen three-hour written examination 35%
- CW: 1 Written coursework/problem paper 45%
- ORAL: Orally assessed coursework 5%
- ORAL: Oral Examination 15%

**Postgrad**
- EXAM: Unseen three-hour written examination 35%
- CW: 1 Written coursework/problem paper 45%
- ORAL: Orally assessed coursework 5%
- ORAL: Oral Examination 15%

**Affiliate**
- CW: One essay 50%
- TEST: One test 50%

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**Yiddish Literature: Special Topics**

**HEBR0045 / HEBR0046**

**Lecturer:** Dr Helen Beer

**Credit value:** 30 (15 Affiliate - 1st term only)

**Pre-requisite:** Elementary Yiddish or equivalent

This course will introduce students to the breadth, depth and diversity of modern Yiddish literature. The vast majority of Yiddish writings remain untranslated and this course will concentrate on lesser known works. Close readings of literary texts will examine a variety of styles and subjects and their historical and cultural contexts.

We will examine fiction, drama and some poetry focusing on works by:
- Efraim Kaganowski
- Itzik Manger
- Esther Kreitman, Puah Rakovski and other women writers
- Avrom Sutzkever
- Shmuel Harendorff

We will study the ways in which Yiddish literature mirrors historical events and social and political change and how that is reflected in a range of literary styles including the avant-garde.

**Assessment:**

**Undergrad**
- CW: Two Essays (3,000 words) 35%
- CW: Coursework (3 pieces) 45%
- ORAL: Oral participation 5%
- ORAL: Oral presentation 15%
European Jewry and the Holocaust
HEBR0050 / HEBR0051
Lecturer: Prof Michael Berkowitz
Credit value: 30 (15 Affiliate – 1 term)

The persecution and systematic mass murder of Europe's Jews during World War II, the Holocaust, is ever-present in contemporary political debates and modern consciousness in the most general sense. Key questions to be addressed include:

--How was it possible for a modern state to initiate and carry out the destruction of European Jewry?
--What comprised the Jews' experiences of life and death in the Holocaust?
--How did the policies toward the Jews fit into the context of Jewish history, German history, and the history of the Second World War?

The cultural underpinnings of Hitler's Germany, and the aspects of the western world that assisted, acquiesced, or opposed the "Final Solution" will be emphasized. Special attention will be devoted to the intersection of culture and politics, as it relates to European Jewish history, Nazi antisemitism and racism, and how media has been used to transmit and modify the legacy of the Holocaust.

The central purpose of the course is to provide a narrative of the principle circumstances and events leading to and comprising the Holocaust, and to have students think more analytically, critically, and historically about the Jewish people and the conditions that made possible the Holocaust.

Assessment: Undergrad
EXAM Unseen three-hour written examination 30%
CW Coursework (5,000 words) 70%

Assessment: Postgrad
EXAM Unseen three-hour written examination 30%
CW Coursework (5,000 words) 70%

Assessment: Affiliate
CW One essay (5,000-6,000 words) 100%
The impact of emigration from Eastern Europe in the late 19th century will include a reflection on the echoes of Eastern European Jewish culture in the Americas and in Palestine/Israel. Jewish political mobilisation in the 20th c., the impact of antisemitism and anti-Jewish violence, and the catastrophe of the German occupation and the Holocaust will be discussed as well as the attempts to rebuild Jewish life after the war and under communism. The seminars will allow for in-depth analysis of textual source material provided in English translation. In case of sufficient interest, an excursion to visit the Polin Museum for the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw will be organised.

### Assessment: Undergrad

| CW | Two essays (2,000 words each) | 50% |
| QUIZ | Quiz x 6 | 30% |
| CW | Oral presentation | 10% |
| CW | Slide presentation | 10% |

### Assessment: Postgrad

| CW | Essay (3,000 words) | 50% |
| QUIZ | Quiz x 6 | 30% |
| CW | Oral presentation | 10% |
| CW | Slide presentation | 10% |

### Assessment: 1 Term UG

| CW | Essay (2,000 words) | 40% |
| QUIZ | Quiz x 4 | 40% |
| CW | Slide presentation | 20% |

### Assessment: 1 Term PG

| CW | Essay (3,000 words) | 40% |
| QUIZ | Quiz x 4 | 40% |
| CW | Slide presentation | 20% |

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**The Arab-Israeli Conflict**

**HEBR0058**

*Lecturer: Prof Neill Lochery*

*Credit value: 15*

The Arab-Israeli dispute has proven to be one of the most intractable conflicts of modern times. With the potential for the Arab-Israeli Wars to develop into international ones, it is vital to understand why the various wars started and why diplomacy has failed to resolve the conflict.

The course employs a three-dimensional approach to understanding the conflict from its origins in 1880 to the present day. It looks at the key developments in:

- The Zionist/Israeli arena
- The Arab world with special reference to the Palestinians
- The international powers of the day

The main concept of the course is that it is vital in order to fully understand the conflict to study all three areas and how they impact upon one another. Students are encouraged to adopt this three-dimensional approach and are introduced to the key Israeli, Arab and international scholarship on these areas.

No prior knowledge of the Arab-Israeli Conflict is required. Students are encouraged to read one of the recommended general histories of the Middle East prior to starting the course.

### Assessment: Undergrad

| CW | One essay (4,000 words) | 100% |

### Assessment: Postgrad

| CW | One essay (4,000 words) | 100% |
Rabbis, Language and Society in the First Millennium CE
HEBR0061
Lecturer: Prof Willem Smelik
Credit value: 15

Over the course of the first millennium CE, the use of Hebrew as a vernacular is commonly assumed to have dwindled, with Aramaic or Greek taking its position at the latest in Roman Palestine. Although the phenomenon of multilingualism is a common feature of Jewish societies throughout the world and throughout Jewish history, it gave rise to the first meta-linguistic reflections in late antiquity. Again in this period, the notion of Hebrew as the holy tongue emerged. This course will focus on the use and perception of Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek in various contexts (such as the legal system, liturgy, scriptural translation and halakhic discourse) from the Hasmonean to the Talmudic periods, and as a corollary on the evolving rabbinic reflection on language selection. Drawing on modern literary theory, textual analysis, variant readings and sociolinguistic models (‘code-switching’), selected texts will be read and analysed to appreciate the the variety of and development in opinions on language use, the correlation of rabbinic reflection and Jewish society, and the distinction between oral and written literatures.

The course is text-based, hence a working knowledge of Hebrew is required, but it is not a language-teaching course, so we will also read the texts in translation. The course will increase methodological awareness in the literary analysis of pre-modern texts.

Assessment: Undergrad  CW  One essay (5,000 words)  100%
Assessment: Postgrad  CW  One essay (5,000 words)  100%

Judaism and the Origins of Christianity
HEBR0062 / HEBR0063
Lecturer: Prof Sacha Stern
Credit value: 30 (15 Affiliate – 1 term)

In the past decades, increasing recognition has been given to the Jewish origins of Christianity and the Jewish context in which Christianity was formed. The scope and implications of this topic are wide. This course will restrict itself to the following, specific objectives: Firstly, to assess the nature of Judaism and Jewish life in the period when Christianity arose. This will involve the study of various Jewish groups that were active in this period, such as Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, as well as the study of post-Biblical Jewish literature including the Dead Sea scrolls. Students will gain an appreciation of the complexity of Judaism and its importance in ancient society. Secondly, to assess the nature of early Christianity in relation to Judaism, and to discuss whether, when, and how, Christianity 'parted ways' from Judaism. Particular attention will be given to Jesus, Paul, and their successors' attitudes to the Jewish people, Jewish law, and Judaism. Thirdly, to consider Jewish-Christian relations, Christian attitudes to Judaism, and Jewish attitudes to Christianity, in the first few centuries of the Common Era.

Admission to this course is open to students of all backgrounds and disciplines. All texts will be studied in translation.

Assessment: Undergrad  EXAM  Unseen three-hour written examination  50%
                        CW  Two essays (3,000 words each)  50%
Assessment: Postgrad  EXAM  Unseen three-hour written examination  50%
                        CW  Two essays (3,000 words each)  50%
Jewish-Muslim Relations in the Modern Middle East
HEBR0067
Lecturer: Dr Seth Anziska
Credit value: 15

Jews and Muslims have lived alongside one another since the rise of Islam in the seventh century along a rich spectrum of interaction, cohabitation, and conflict. How did they get along? What brought these communities together and what challenges animated their relationship? Against the backdrop of early encounters, this course focuses on the history of Jewish-Muslim relations in the 19th and 20th century Middle East, concluding with contemporary relations in Europe and farther afield.

By focusing on a range of perspectives, including intellectual and religious life, social and cultural exchange, politics, nationalism, and language, the course traces the emergence of distinct and overlapping identities from the late Ottoman Empire through the rise of nation-states in the Middle East and adjacent regions. Alongside the everyday experience of inter-communal living, as seen through the lens of primary sources in translation (including sacred texts, poetry, fiction, letters, film, and memoirs), the course explores the impact of Zionism and the Arab-Israeli conflict on questions of identity, memory, and the complex relationship between these groups.

The course also focuses on historiography: specifically, the different ways in which varying accounts of communal relations have been understood and written in scholarship and received by the wider public. What is at stake in the study of Jewish-Muslim Relations?

Assessment: Undergrad
CW Two essays (2,000 words each) 100%
Assessment: Postgrad
CW One essay (4,000 words) 100%
Assessment: BA Affiliate
MA Affiliate
CW One Essay (3,500 words) 100%
CW One Essay (5,000 words) 100%

US-Israeli Relations from 1948 to the Present Day
HEBR0069
Lecturer: Prof Neill Lochery
Credit value: 15 Affiliate

From Truman to Trump, and from Ben-Gurion to Netanyahu, US-Israeli Relations have not been as easy or straightforward as the tag of ‘special relationship’ implies. The important bi-lateral relationship has been at the centre of the development of Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict. The course encourages students to develop a critical understanding of this complex relationship and its close connection to the domestic politics and influences in Israel and the United States. Key areas covered include:

- The US and the birth of Israel in 1948
- President and the Suez War in 1956
- The US and the Six Day War in 1967
- The politics of the US arms lift to Israel during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War
- US and Israel in peacemaking during the 1970’s and 1980’s
- The failure of US mediation efforts in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
Students are introduced to the key American, Israeli and international scholarship on these areas. They also look at important primary documentation related to the bi-lateral relationship.

No prior knowledge of Israeli or American history is required, but students are encouraged to read one of the recommended background histories of US-Israeli relations prior to starting the course.

Assessment: Undergrad  CW  One essay (4,000 words)  100%
Assessment: Postgrad  CW  One essay (4,000 words)  100%

MA Jewish Studies Core Course
HEBR0078
Lecturer:  Dr Lily Kahn
Credit value:  30

Jewish Studies is a dynamic area of study that can be approached from many disciplinary perspectives, including those of history, religious studies, literature, linguistics, and politics. This course brings together MA students from different academic backgrounds and provides them with a coherent graduate-level introduction to this diverse and fascinating field.

The course begins by providing students with a theoretical overview of the main approaches to the field, presenting key concepts in history, politics, linguistics, and literature from a Jewish Studies perspective. It then moves on to examine topics within each of these disciplines in more depth. We will consider a range of specific issues in Jewish Studies and place them within their broader theoretical and methodological frameworks. Questions to be considered include the following: How has the Hebrew Bible been interpreted through the ages? How useful is rabbinic literature as a historical source? How do the changes that Jewish society underwent during the early modern period reflect broader cultural and religious developments? What role does the State of Israel play in the contemporary world? What can Hebrew and Yiddish literature teach us about historical trauma? What makes a language Jewish?

Assessment:  CW  Essay (2,500 words)  50%
CW  Literature review (1,500 words)  35%
ORAL  Oral presentation (15-20 minutes)  15%

Jewish Literary Aramaic
HEBR0082 (UG) /HEBR0037 (PG)
Lecturer:  Prof Willem Smelik
Credit value:  30 (15 Affiliate - 1 Term)
Pre-requisite:  Adequate knowledge of Biblical Aramaic

The Aramaic language emerged from the Mesopotamian steppe, with the tribes that spoke it and eventually turned their language into a trade language, that gradually conquered the entire Ancient Near East, from Egypt to India. From the patriarchs as wandering Aramaeans, over Israelites returning from the first Babylonian exile to the scholars of the Talmudic periods, and beyond, including medieval Europe, Aramaic was a staple language of Jewish literacy. Indeed, Jewish Aramaic literature belongs to the formative period of rabbinic Judaism, including Biblical Aramaic, Qumran Aramaic, Rabbinic Aramaic in various dialects and literary forms (letters, halakhic debate, Bible translation, Midrash, liturgical poems, medicine, magic, responsa literature, and the Zohar).
This course will offer an essential introduction to both the language and the literature. We will focus on postbiblical Jewish Aramaic literature, initially the Targums (Jewish Aramaic translations), but also the Midrashim, Talmudim and piyyutim (poetry). All texts will be read in Aramaic, with detailed attention to grammar, to the Hebrew source text wherever relevant, exegetical traditions and practices, and linguistic developments.

All the Aramaic texts will be distributed in class.

Assessment: Undergrad

| EXAM | Unseen three-hour written examination | 50% |
| CW | Coursework | 50% |

Assessment: Postgrad

| EXAM | Unseen three-hour written examination | 50% |
| CW | Coursework | 50% |

Sumerian
HEBR0095

Lecturer: Prof Mark Geller
Credit value: 30

The course will introduce students to the basics of Sumerian grammar, which will be applied to a selection of Sumerian inscriptions and historical texts. Students will be expected to read Sumerian in the original script. No language pre-requisites.

Assessment: Undergrad

| EXAM | Unseen three-hour written examination | 75% |
| CW | Coursework | 25% |

Assessment: Postgrad

| EXAM | Unseen three-hour written examination | 75% |
| CW | Coursework | 25% |

Advanced Biblical Hebrew
HEBR0099

Lecturer: Dr Lily Kahn
Credit value: 30

Where does the Biblical Hebrew definite article come from? Is the wayyiqtol a borrowed Egyptian feature? Do the texts of the Hebrew Bible contain remnants of noun cases? Why do some masculine plural nouns end in ית? Why are masculine-looking numerals used with feminine nouns, and vice-versa? These are just some of the linguistic puzzles which we will explore in this advanced-level course intended for students who have completed Introductory and Intermediate Biblical Hebrew. The course will focus on a broad range topics in Biblical Hebrew morphology and syntax. It will familiarise you with the scholarly literature on Biblical Hebrew and will train you to write essays on linguistic topics. This course is compulsory for students in the final year of BA Ancient Languages.

Assessment: Undergrad

| EXAM | Unseen three-hour written examination | 50% |
| CW | Two Essays (2,500 words) | 50% |