TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY CORPUS CHRISTI

THE JEW IN THE MODERN WORLD - Spring 2015

RELS 4390.001     MW 3:30-4:45     OCNR 117

Instructor: Dr. Kenneth D. Roseman
Telephone: 361-537-0588
Internet: Kenneth.Roseman@tamucc.edu

Office Hours: By appointment especially before and after class

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this course, the student will be able to

1. Identify the major periods, events and personalities of modern Jewish history.

2. Describe the interactions of the general communities in which Jews lived (host societies) and the Jews who lived there, making clear distinctions regarding different times and places.

3. Describe major cultural and religious changes that occurred in Jewish civilization between 1500 and the present, including religious reform, social change movements, challenges to traditional belief, etc.

4. Describe both anti- and philo-Semitic movements during this period.

5. Define terms such as Shoah (Holocaust), Hasidism, Reform Judaism, Orthodox Judaism, Conservative Judaism, Haskalah (Enlightenment), shtetl, pogrom, Zionism, and many others.

6. Describe causal relationships between events in one place in the Jewish world and other places, including the notion of “hegemony.”

READING AND OTHER ASSIGNMENTS

The primary book for the class will be Howard M. Sachar, A History of the Jews in the Modern World, paperback, most recent edition.

This book will be supplemented by documents from Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History, occasional offprints (such as the record of Napoleon’s Sanhedrin), an atlas of maps of Jewish history and DVDs and recordings.
Students will take two brief quizzes, each of which will count ten percent (10%) of the grade and a final exam that will count fifty percent (50%) of the grade.

The remaining thirty percent (30%) of the grade will be based on a term research paper which is described below.

**RESEARCH PAPER**

The term research paper is to focus on one topic in significant detail and depth. It is to be between ten and fifteen (10-15) double-spaced page in length. It should contain appropriate bibliographic references and end-notes. It should be typed, and both correct spelling and proper grammatical usage are expected.

The range of subjects is quite broad. This list is provided *only* to suggest the kind of topics that would be suitable. You are asked to submit a proposed topic during the third week of the course; I am available before and after class by appointment to discuss your ideas for paper topics. You should try to find a topic that coordinates with an area that is of intrinsic interest to you since the field is extremely broad and varied and since I am prepared to entertain a wide range of ideas, as this list demonstrates.

- The Jews of Turkey in the Sixteenth Century
- The Origins of Jewish Historical Writing
- Dona Gracia Mendes and Joseph, Duke of Naxos
- Baruch (Benedict) Spinoza
- The Amsterdam Jewish Community and its Connection with Rembrandt
- Jewish Settlements in the Caribbean
- Peter Stuyvesant and the Jews
- The Ukrainian Pogroms of 1903-1905
- Theodore Herzl and the Rise of Zionism
- The Kibbutz
- Jews Migrate West in the United States
- Jews and the American Civil War
- Israel’s War of Independence
- Jews in German Culture during the Weimar Republic
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Methodological problems of studying Jewish history – one people at different places at the same time under varying influences and at the same place at different times and influenced by changing cultures</td>
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<td>READING ASSIGNMENT</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sachar, chapters I, VIII (Hereafter referred to as “S”)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mendes-Flohr/Reinhart, Section VI: 9, 10, 11 (Referred to as MF/R)</td>
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<td>Section VIII: 4, 6, 7</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Iberian experience: Golden Age to Expulsion (1492/6), resettlement</td>
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<td>In Italy, North Africa, Holland, Turkey, New World</td>
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<td>READING ASSIGNMENT</td>
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<td>S, chapters II – VII</td>
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<td>MF/R, Section II: 1, 7, 14, 17</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>New Intellectual trends in 16th century: Historiography, mysticism, codification of laws, challenge to orthodox belief (Spinoza), false messiahs</td>
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<td>MF/R, section VII: 1, 5, 8, 11-15</td>
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<td><em>Term paper topics due</em></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Polish Hegemony: Economic trends, anti-Semitism, Hasidism</td>
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<td>S, chapters 10-14</td>
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<td>MF/R, section III: 1, 2, 5, 12, 14</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Enlightenment in the West: Religious reform, Mendelssohn, merging of Jewish wisdom with secular studies (universities), Court Jews</td>
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READING ASSIGNMENT

MF/R, section I: 7, 8

*First quiz*

6 Emancipation: citizenship, Napoleonic Sanhedrin, French Revolution, British naturalization, anti-Semitism

READING ASSIGNMENT

S, chapters 15-19

7 Russia and Its Jews: Tzarist policies, shtetl, pogroms, social change movements, false hopes and subsequent repression

READING ASSIGNMENT

S, chapters 29, 35
MF/R, section X: 2, 6, 15, 32, 36, 43, 53

8/9 Zionism and Israel: ideology vs. pragmatic survival, language, relations with Turks and British, socialism and kibbutz, independence, immigration

READING ASSIGNMENT

S, chapters 22-28
MF/R, section XI: 2, 9, 17, 24, 33, 34

*Second quiz*

10 Shoah: Destruction of European Jewry

READING ASSIGNMENT

S, chapters 20, 34
MF/R, section IX: 1, 2, 3, 8, 24, 29, 46

11 Jews Arrive in North America: Colonial and Early National Periods, integration into society and resistance, why Jews succeeded
READING ASSIGNMENT

S, chapters 31, 32, 33, 35
MF/R, section XII: 3, 6, 18, 30, 31, 34

12 Jewish life in America: Civil War to Present, phases of settlement, demographics, issues for future

Review discussion
Term paper due

13 Jewish interactions with other civilizations, contribution

14 Review and final exam

ATTENDANCE

Especially early in the semester, until I know you by name and by sight, I shall take attendance at the beginning of the class period, which means you will want to be on time. Regular class attendance is vital to your success in this course. The lectures and discussions in class periods are one of two indispensable foundations of this course, the other being the readings. You should expect to attend all class sessions, especially since the material presented in class will supplement rather than repeat the readings. You will not be able to do well in the class without attending on a regular basis, taking good notes, participating actively in discussions and paying attention.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

1. Be on time. Late entry into the room disturbs everyone else and diminishes the opportunity for learning by your classmates. If you know that you will have to leave early, try to sit near the door and please inform me in advance.

2. Stay on topic. It is sometimes fun to digress and stray from the subject, but we shall try not to do so. We have a very limited time to cover a large subject, so we need to use our time efficiently to get the maximum benefit from the class experience. Side conversations are not acceptable.

3. Make as little extraneous noise as possible. Everyone sneezes and coughs occasionally; that can’t be avoided. But do not snap your gum, crumple paper or otherwise disturb your neighbors. You may use your laptop computer to take notes, but if the number of
laptops clicking and clacking becomes too intrusive, we may have to limit their use. Surfing the web or using cell phones or other electronic devices (even if you are listening through ear buds) during class time is not allowed. I know there are important events to watch on your screens and that your friends desperately need to hear from you. Hold off. I can always spot someone using a laptop for other than classroom purposes. I’ll pay attention to you; please respect me by according me the same courtesy. During quizzes and exams, desk tops will be clear of all electronic devices.

4. Stay focused on the course and its material. During class time, do not read material that is not related to the course, write text messages, watch Dr. Phil or SportsCenter or otherwise lose focus on what this class is about. If your head is somewhere else and I notice you are distracted, you can expect that I shall call on you very soon!

5. Center comments on issues and ideas, not on people. It is one thing to make a critical comment about an idea (“I don’t think the idea of an established religion makes sense, for the following reasons....”) and a very different thing to direct comments toward the person who expressed the idea (“Established religion? You’re really dumb to say something like that.”) The society we shall try to create in our classroom will be characterized by mutual respect and personal dignity.

6. Absence from quizzes, exam or late written assignments: I expect you to turn in all your work at the announced time and to take the quizzes and exam at the right time. Only in extreme, emergency cases will a make-up or delay be allowed. “The dog ate my homework” won’t work; control your pets.

7. There will be no provision for extra-credit work. You’ll have enough to do with the regular assignments.

8. Assistance: Because I am an adjunct (part-time) member of the faculty, I am not on campus except around the time of class sessions. If you need to consult me, we can find time before or after class. I shall also be available by phone (537-0588) or by appointment at my home office.

9. Freedom of speech: Feel free to raise your hand with a question or comment. I shall acknowledge you, but I shall also try to finish the point I am making. Once it is clear that I know you want to say something, you do not need to keep your hand up. As soon as possible, I shall give you the floor. There are no “dumb questions or comments.” Usually questions and comments point to my own failure to make something clear and what you say may help others in the class understand something better. Active participation is welcomed and encouraged.

10. Dropping the class: I hope you won’t have to do this, but sometimes it is necessary or wise. The University has established the following policy for dropping a class.
“The grade of W will be assigned to any student dropping a course by the date stated in the class schedule (end of the tenth week of classes in the fall). No student is eligible to receive a W without completing the official drop process by this deadline. After the W date listed in the class schedule, a student will not be allowed to drop a course. During the refund period, the Change of Registration Form must be processed by the Business Office before submitting it to the Office of Admissions and Records. A change of section or a change to or from audit is a change of registration and requires that the add/drop process be followed.”

11. Academic Integrity: Cheating or plagiarism on an assignment or test or failure to complete any of the course requirements will result in a zero grade for the assignment in question. Plagiarism, even when unintentional, is a form of stealing, so it is better to err on the side of a more complete acknowledgement of sources. Particularly severe cases will be reported to University officials for further action. You should know that there are web sites on which a paper can be scanned to see if it repeats materials that were already submitted by others and have been enter into a bank of papers; it’s almost always obvious when this occurs. Bad idea.

THREE STATEMENTS OF UNIVERSITY POLICY

Academic Advising

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree is granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood 203. For more information call 361-825-3466.

Notice to Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.
Grade Appeal Process

Students who believe that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedure or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged first to discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website at http://www.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.