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GENERAL INFORMATION

Professor Information

Instructor: Oren Stier

Email: stiero@fiu.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description And Purpose

The wide range of religious, literary, and political expression of Jews and Judaism throughout their history and all over the world provide excellent lenses through which we can examine Jewish cultural pluralism, on its own and as a foundation for further Jewish studies within a global, multicultural context.

This course departs from the typical introductory Jewish Studies course as traditionally conceived, which often focuses more narrowly on religious texts, practices, and identities without setting those cultural products within their broader cultural and global contexts.

This course seeks to expand that traditional framework by defining Jewish culture as pluralistic, from its very origins up to the present day, using a collection of practices and discourses that return the Jews themselves to the center of their own self-definition. The course proceeds chronologically, from the biblical origins of Jewish culture through its 20th century reverberations in Europe, Israel, and America, focusing on the pluralism of Jewish cultures throughout this long history.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- describe and summarize the basic chronology and wide range of the global Jewish experience;
- compare and contrast recurring tensions between Jewish national and Diaspora cultures; and
- analyze Jewish cultures in relation to majority cultures in the ancient and contemporary Middle East, Europe, and the Americas.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Policies

Please review the policies page as it contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU and additional information on the standards for acceptable netiquette important for online courses.

Technical Requirements & Skills

One of the greatest barriers to taking an online course is a lack of basic computer literacy. By computer literacy we mean being able to manage and organize computer files efficiently, and learning to use your computer's operating system and software quickly and easily. Keep in mind that this is not a computer literacy course; but students enrolled in online courses are expected to have moderate proficiency using a computer. Please go to the "What's Required" webpage to find out more information on this subject.

Please visit our Technical Requirements webpage for additional information.

Accessibility And Accommodation

For detailed information about the specific limitations with the technologies used in this course, please click here.

For more information about Blackboard's Accessibility Commitment, click here.

For additional assistance please contact our Disability Resource Center.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Academic Misconduct Statement

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Academic Misconduct includes: **Cheating** – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. **Plagiarism** – The use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is responsible for plagiarism.

Learn more about the academic integrity policies and procedures as well as student resources that can help you prepare for a successful semester.

Textbook

Unsettled: An Anthropology of the Jews
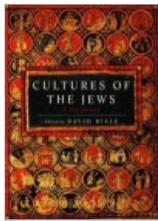
Melvin Konner

NY: Viking Compass, 2003

ISBN-10

978-0142196328

You may purchase your textbook online at the FIU Bookstore.
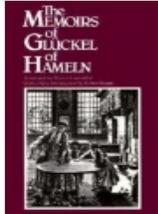
Cultures of the Jews: A New History

David Biale, ed.

NY: Schocken Books, 2002

ISBN-10

978-0805241310

You may purchase your textbook online at the FIU Bookstore.

The Memoirs of Glückel of Hameln

trans. Marvin Lowenthal, introduction by Robert S. Rosen

NY: Schocken, 1977

ISBN-10

978-0805205725

You may purchase your textbook online at the FIU Bookstore.

Expectations Of This Course

This is an online course, meaning that most of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same as for a traditional course; in fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills that can make them more demanding for some students.

Students are expected to:

- **Review the how to get started information** located in the course content
- **Introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self introduction in the appropriate discussion forum
- **Take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with Blackboard
- **Interact** online with instructor/s and peers
- **Review** and follow the course calendar

COURSE DETAIL

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place via **Messages.**

Messages are a private and secure text-based communication that occurs within a Course and among Course members. Users must log on to Blackboard to send/receive/read messages. The Messages tool is located on the left side Course Menu (Blackboard user interface). It is recommended that students check their messages routinely to ensure up-to-date communication.

For more information on professional writing and technical communication click here.

Blogs

Blog Postings/Comments - 5 prompts, lowest grade will be dropped. 5% per prompt, totaling 20% of final grade

In this course we will be discussing cultural change in the wide Jewish world over time and across different geographical regions. Periodic blog assignments will assist students in communicating with fellow classmates and sharing and exchanging ideas about Jewish cultures and their conflicts and contradictions.

Blog Rubric:

Criteria	Unsatisfactory (0-1 points)	Satisfactory (2-3 points)	Exemplary (4-5 points)
Quantity and Timeliness	Does not submit at least one initial response early in the session and/or does not submit at least one peer response closer to the end of the session.	Submits at least one initial response early in the session, and at least one peer response closer to the end of the session.	Submits one initial response early in the session and one or more thoughtful peer responses early in the session.
Spelling and mechanics	Does not submit posts that are in complete sentences and/or two or more of the complete sentences are grammatically incorrect and have more than 2 spelling errors.	Submits posts that have one or more grammatically incorrect sentences and/or two spelling errors.	Submits posts that contain grammatically correct, complete sentences without any spelling errors.
Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of content within the context of the course	Post(s) and responses show little evidence of knowledge and understanding of course content within the context of the course.	Post(s) and responses show satisfactory evidence of knowledge and understanding of course content within the context of the course.	Post(s) and responses show exemplary evidence of knowledge and understanding of course content within the context of the course.
Generates learning within the community	Posts do not attempt to elicit responses and reflections from other learners and/or responses do not build upon the ideas of other learners to take the discussion deeper.	Posts attempt to elicit responses and reflections from other learners and responses build somewhat upon the ideas of other learners to take the discussion deeper.	Posts elicit responses and reflections from other learners and responses build upon and integrate multiple views from other learners to take the discussion deeper.

Keep in mind that forum discussions are public, and care should be taken when determining what to post.

Glossary Of Terms Identification Exercises

(10% for each exercise, totaling 30% of final grade)

This assignment tests student knowledge of essential terms and provides a vehicle to further student understanding of course materials.

Students are required to complete three term identification exercises. In each exercise 20 terms will be randomly drawn from the module glossaries that have been supplied for each module of the course: glossaries for modules 1-4, inclusive, apply to the first exercise, glossaries for modules 5-7, inclusive, apply to the second exercise, and glossaries for modules 8-10, inclusive, apply to the third exercise. In each case you will have 60 minutes to complete all 20 term identifications according to a specific format.

This exercise requires you to write **at least two sentences** for each answer: the first sentence will *define* the term, and the second will put the term in *context* and display your additional knowledge of the term. The first sentence you will provide will be drawn from the definition of the term that has been supplied to you in the module glossary; regularly studying each module's terms and their definitions will greatly assist you in preparing for this part of the exercise. The second sentence will require you to go back to your notes, to the textbooks, and/or to outside resources in order to display your knowledge of the term in context.

Each sentence in each answer is worth 0-2 points; each total answer will be worth up to 4 points, for a total of **80 points** for each exercise; partial credit will be awarded wherever possible.

Please refer to the following example as a model 4-point answer:
Example: *Definition:* Goy [term provided in module 1 glossary] literally means "nation" and is usually used to refer to a non-Jew

[definition supplied in module 1 glossary]. *Context:* According to David Biale, the conceptual category "goy" developed alongside the category "Jew," since Jewish identity cannot be separated from the power relations between Jews and their neighbors.

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the "Practice Quiz" from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams. It is your responsibility to make sure your computer meets the minimum hardware requirements.

Please note assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet. If you need further assistance please contact FIU Online Support Services.

Essays

Essay Rubric:

(Essay 1 and 2, 15% each; essay 3, 20%; totaling 50% of final grade)

Students will complete three essays in this course. Essays will provide opportunities for students to display knowledge about Jewish cultures in broader context, in dialogue with surrounding cultures.

Criteria	Unsatisfactory (0-2 points)	Limited (3-6 points)	Proficient (7-9 points)	Exemplary (10 points)
Structure/ Organization	Essay lacks structure/organization	The information appears to be disorganized or barely organized.	Information is organized with some or mostly well-constructed paragraphs and some overall structure.	Information is very organized with well-constructed paragraphs and overall structure.
Style & Mechanics	Numerous grammatical, spelling, and/or punctuation errors; poorly written.	Many grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors; some awkward writing.	Few/almost no grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors; readable style.	No grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors; clear and compelling writing style.
Quality of Argument/ Fulfills Assignment	Essay has nothing to do with the assigned topic.	Essay has little to do with the assigned topic and/or relates somewhat to the assignment.	Essay relates to the assigned topic and/or fulfills most of the terms of the assignment.	Essay clearly relates to the assigned topic and fulfills the terms of the assignment.
Content/ Documentation	No evidence student has completed assigned readings and lectures.	Scant evidence student has completed assigned readings/lectures; many or some sources are not accurately documented.	Evidence student has completed assigned readings/lectures; many or most sources are accurately documented.	Exemplary evidence student has completed assigned readings/lectures; all sources are accurately documented in proper format.

Late Policy

- Blog postings and comments are expected to be regular and ongoing; periodic prompts will encourage students to focus on particular issues; grading is based on the total of posts and comments from when the Blog opens until it closes—a two-week period, during which students are expected to participate several times in the forum. Students failing to post and/or reply during any Blog period will receive a 0 for that Blog.

- Term Identification Exercises close at 11:59pm on the indicated date; no late submissions will be accepted and students will

receive a grade of 0 for any missed assignments, aside from documented cases of medical of family emergency.

- Essays are due by 11:59pm on the date indicated but will be accepted late: late essays will be penalized **one half letter grade** (five points) for each day late, or part thereof, up to a maximum 30 point deduction, except in documented cases of medical or family emergency.

Plagiarism Policy

PLAGIARISM and any and all forms of academic dishonesty will *not* be tolerated. Plagiarism is stealing someone else's words or original ideas. Plagiarism occurs in two forms: (1) uncredited quotations (including words copied from elsewhere but not bracketed by quotation marks and quotations without proper citations and documentation) and (2) uncredited paraphrases. In both cases, to avoid plagiarism, students must properly cite the source material. Only commonly known facts and concepts, general material learned in the course of research and study, and students' original ideas do not require citation. Students found violating standards will fail the course and will be reported directly to the Office of Academic Affairs. For useful guidelines, go to the **Plagiarism Prevention** section on the FIU Library's website: http://libguides.fiu.edu/plagiarism.

Turn-around Time

- Except in cases of emergency and Jewish holidays, the professor will reply to student emails within 48 hours during the week and 72 hours over the weekend (emails sent between 5pm Friday and 12:01am Monday).
- Except in cases of emergency and Jewish holidays, the professor will grade student assignments within 7 days of their due date.

Grading

Course Requirements	Weight
5 Blogs (Posts and Comments required) (5% each) Lowest grade will be dropped; see rubric for guidelines.	20%
3 Term Identification Exercises (10% each)	30%
3 Essay Assignments	50%
Total	**100%**

Letter Grade	Range	Letter Grade	Range	Letter Grade	Range
A	Above 93	B	83 - 87	C	70 - 76
A-	90 - 92	B-	80 - 82	D	60 - 69
B+	88 - 89	C+	77 - 79	F	below 60

COURSE CALENDAR

Weekly Schedule

NOTE: Modules begin at 12:01 am and conclude at 11:59 pm on the indicated dates.

Date	Module	Tasks Due
August 21 - 27	**Module 1:** Introduction: What is Jewish culture?	- Introduce Yourself! - Review Module Glossary
August 28 - September 10 (two weeks)	**Module 2:** Biblical Cultures	- Review Module Glossary - Blog #1: Israelite National Identity (Post/reply closing date: Sept. 10)
September 11 - 17	**Module 3:** Babylon, Greece, and Rome	- Review Module Glossary - Essay Assignment #1
September 18 - 24	**Module 4:** Rabbinic Judaism and the Rise of Christianity	- Review Module Glossary - Glossary of Terms Identification Exercise #1
September 25 - October 8 (two weeks)	**Module 5:** The Rise of Islam and Sephardic/Mizrachi Jewish Cultures	- Review Module Glossary - Blog #2: Jewish Life under Islam and Christianity (Post/reply closing date: Oct. 8)
October 9 - 15	**Module 6:** Magic, Mysticism, and the Sephardic Diaspora	- Review Module Glossary - Blog #3: Jewish Mystical and Folk Practices (Post/reply closing date: Oct. 22; NOTE: closing date extends into the next module)
October 16 - 29 (two weeks)	**Module 7:** Ashkenaz	- Review Module Glossary - Essay Assignment #2 - Glossary of Terms Identification Exercise #2
October 30 - November 12 (two weeks)	**Module 8:** Europe: from Modernity to the Holocaust	- Review Module Glossary - Blog #4: Modernity and Jewish Culture (Post/reply closing date: Nov. 12)
November 13 - 19	**Module 9:** Jews of North Africa and the Middle East	- Review Module Glossary - Blog #5: Non-Ashkenazi Jews (Post/reply closing date: Nov. 26; NOTE: closing date extends into the next module)
November 20 - 26	**Module 10:** Jewish Cultures in Israel	- Review Module Glossary - Glossary of Terms Identification Exercise #3
November 27 - December 9 (two weeks)	**Module 11:** American Jewish Cultures and Beyond	- Essay Assignment #3