PHIL 2100.001: Introduction to Judaism  
Fall 2013

Rabbi Dan Lewin  
Date/Time: M 2:00 –4:50 PM  
Location: ENV 190  
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Course Description:
This class will provide a one semester overview of the Judaism with a focus on the Jewish religion as distinct from the national or political history of the Jewish people. The course will cover a wide range of topics including a historical survey, outline of the Jewish calendar, yearly holidays, basic laws and rituals, Jewish life moments such as circumcisions and weddings, famous leading figures, as well as a picture of what the diverse Jewish world looks like today.

Course objectives: By the end of the course students should be familiar with the distinctive beliefs and practices, the distinctive features associated with Judaism in various eras, as well as the major works of Jewish religious literature.

Course Requirements and Grading Policy:
There will be a midterm and a final exam. Each will be worth 40 % of the final grade. They will consist of a combination of short answers and essays. Class participation will be worth 20 % of the final grade. This will include 1) preparing at least two written analytical questions or comments from the assigned readings to be completed by that day (the nature of these comments will be explained further in the first class) to be handed in to me at the start of the upcoming class and 2) active involvement in class discussions.

No more than five class absences, for whatever reasons, will be permitted. For every class missed after that, the student’s final grade will be reduced by 5%. All exams for this course will be given only on the dates noted on the tentative schedule. Make-up exams will be given only for university authorized absences and, in cases of emergency, such as a serious illness or a death in the family. In cases of emergency, to be eligible for a make-up exam, you must submit to me (a) written documentation for your excuse, and (b) a phone number I can call to verify excuses.

Students may not tape record lectures or classroom discussion. Students who have a disability that warrants the use of a tape recorder may use one after discussing its use with me. Students who use laptops may not access the Internet during class.

Special Accommodation: The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must
obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Required Texts:
Course Reader (CR) - A reader assembled by the instructor

Tentative Schedule:

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>General Topics and Assignments:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2-Sep</td>
<td>Labor Day (university closed; no class)</td>
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| 2    | 9-Sep  | Course Introduction: Principles of Jewish Faith and Ethics  
Reading:  
Tanakh – Exodus ch. 19-20; Deutoronomy ch. 5,  
Twersky, pp. 35-63, 76-86 |
| 3    | 16-Sep | The Hebrew Bible- Structure of the Text, and Origin of Jewish Law  
Reading  
Ouaknin pp.1-82 .  
Robinson ch. 5 |
| 4    | 23-Sep | Classical Religious Literature (Talmud, Rabbinic Judaism, and Halachah)  
Reading:  
Ouaknin pp. 166-176, 193-209, 215-240 |
| 5    | 30-Sep | Commandments, Rituals, and Judaism in Daily Life  
Reading:  
A Maimonides Reader, pp. 88- 93  
Heschel pp. 12-63  
Tanakh, Leviticus ch. 11  
Robinson, ch. 4 |
| 6    | 7-Oct  | The Jewish Calendar and Yearly Cycle  
Reading:  
Tanakh: Exodus 1-15, Numbers 28:1, 30:1, Leviticus ch. 23  
Robinson, ch. 2  
Heschel pp. 64-101  
Steinsaltz 199-132, 146-150, 229-240 |
7 14-Oct  Understanding Jewish Prayer:
Reading:
Robinson pp. 7-53
Robinson ch. 6

8 21-Oct  Midterm Exam/Jewish Philosophy and Mysticism
Reading:
Robinson, pp. 360-390
CR

9 28-Oct  Esoteric Jewish Literature and Judaism in the Modern Era
Reading:
Robinson, pp. 404-457
CR – excerpts from Steinsaltz, *The Thirteen Petalled Rose: A Discourse On The Essence Of Jewish Existence And Belief*

10 4-Nov  Jewish Lifecycles
Reading:
Tanakh – Genesis, chpt. 17 Leviticus 12; 1-3, Deuteronomy chapter 29, Exodus 19:4-5,
Robinson, ch. 3
Twersky, pp. 99-100, 211-215

11 11-Nov  Significant Periods in Early Jewish History
Reading:
CR

12 18-Nov  Jewish History: Responses to Challenges of Persecution and Modernity
Reading:
CR

13 25-Nov  The Land of Israel, Zionism, and the Modern State
Reading:
CR

14 2-Dec  Contemporary Jewish Movements
Reading:
Robinson, pp. 55-63, ch. 9
15 WEDNESDAY 11-Dec  FINAL EXAM (tentative date per UNT Registrar)