Syllabus on Modern Jewish History

This is an upper-division course that will treat European Jewish history chronologically from the Jewish emancipation of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries through and beyond the Holocaust. The bulk of the work for this class will involve in-class analyses of primary sources and consideration of the main questions that historians ask about European Jewry in the modern era:

How did Jews attempt to find their way in various European states during specific historical moments? How did antisemitism affect their experiences? How did Jews try to resolve the tensions between assimilation and the preservation of their traditions? Requirements include weekly comments on the readings, written summaries of recent secondary sources, a midterm, a quiz, and a final exam.

Available at bookstore:


**Requirements:**

*Conduct, attendance, and participation (10 points)*

Students are expected to attend every class, to arrive on time, to come prepared in terms of the reading and writing assignments, and to participate in class discussions. If students use mobile devices in class, they are expected to use them *only* for taking notes or viewing materials for the course that are posted on Sakai. There are no excused absences. Courtesy dictates that students who cannot attend a scheduled class should let me know via email or voicemail prior to that class.

*Written comments on each week's assigned reading in the text (10 points)*

At the beginning of each unit (specific dates are marked on the syllabus), students are to bring to that day's class a double-spaced and typewritten paper that (1) puts something particularly striking from the assigned chapter in *Gartner in their own words with page references inside parentheses*; (2) contains a brief comment on the issue at hand; and (3) asks one specific question about a relevant historical problem from the chapter. Each short paper that adheres to all the guidelines will receive one full point. If students are absent, I will accept their papers, so long as the comments arrive *prior* to the start of that day's class. There are 13 opportunities to earn these points, i.e., students may earn additional credit by writing more than 10 comments.

*Written summaries of each week's assigned secondary source (40 points)*

One peer-reviewed secondary source is part of each week's required reading. On the dates marked in the syllabus, students will show their familiarity with that week's assigned essay by turning in via Sakai Assignments a two-three-page essay that (1) places the author's main argument in their own words; (2) comments on the main primary sources used by the author; and (3) steps back from the article in order to put it in perspective with regard to issues of Jewish history. Only essays submitted as attachments via Sakai Assignments *prior* to the class on which they are due will count. Students can earn up to 4 points for each paper. Detailed instructions for this paper are posted on Sakai. There are 12 opportunities to turn in these papers: I will count the 10 highest grades.

*Midterm examination (10 points)*

*Quiz on Jacobson (10 points)*

*Final examination (10 points)*

**When you complete this course you will have learned:**

The basic contours of modern Jewish history
How religious and modern antisemitism affected the Jewish historical experience
Origins of the state of Israel
The factors that have influenced modern Jewish self-definition(s)
How historians treat primary and secondary sources
**Tuesday, January 19**

**Introduction** to the course and its requirements

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**Thursday, January 21**

Read Gartner, Chapter One – “The Heritage of Medieval Judaism”


Read these documents on Sakai Resources:

- Jan 21-Expulsion from France (1182)
- Jan 21-Black Death (1349)
- Jan 21-Luther (1543)

By 11 am, bring your paper on Gartner, Chapter One, and turn in via Sakai Assignments your summary of the Baron article.

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**Tuesday, January 26**

Read Gartner, Chapter Two – “Glimmerings of a New Age”

Read this document on Sakai Resources:

- Jan 26-Chmielnicki

Read these documents in Mendes-Flohr & Reinharz:

- I.1 Menasseh Ben Israel, “How Profitable the Nation of the Jews Are,” 9-11
- II.1 The Sephardi Community of Amsterdam, “The Writ of Excommunication Against Baruch Spinoza,” 62

By 11 am, bring your paper on Gartner, Chapter Two.

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**Thursday, January 28**


By 11 am, turn in via Sakai Assignments your summary of the Carlebach article.

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**Tuesday, February 2**

Read Gartner, Chapter Three – “A Rift Opening, 1720-1780”

Read these documents in Mendes-Flohr & Reinharz:

- I.2 John Toland, “Reasons for Naturalizing the Jews in Great Britain and Ireland,” 12-15
- VI.1 François-Marie Arouet (Voltaire), “Jews,” 279-280
- VI.2 Isaac de Pinto, “An Apology for the Jewish Nation,” 280-282
- VI.3 François-Marie Arouet (Voltaire), “Reply to de Pinto,” 282-283
- IX.1 Peter Stuyvesant, “Petition to Expel the Jews from New Amsterdam,” 501
- IX.2 Dutch West India Company, “Reply to Stuyvesant’s Petition,” 502
IX.3 Dutch West India Company, “Rights of the Jews of New Amsterdam,” 503

By 11 am, bring your paper on Gartner, Chapter Three.

**Thursday, February 4**

Read on Sakai Resources: Adam Sutcliffe, “Can a Jew Be a Philosophe? Isaac de Pinto, Voltaire, and Jewish Participation in the European Enlightenment,” in *Jewish Social Studies* v. 6, no. 3 (Spring/Summer 2000): 31-51.

By 11 am, turn in via Sakai Assignments your summary of the Sutcliffe article.

**Tuesday, February 9**

Read Gartner, Chapter Four – “Era of Revolution”

Read these documents in Mendes-Flohr & Reinharz:

I.9 Christian Wilhelm von Dohm, “Concerning the Amelioration of the Civil Status of the Jews,” 27-34
I.10 Johann David Michaelis, “Arguments Against Dohm,” 34-36
I.11 Moses Mendelssohn, “Response to Dohm,” 37-40
I.12 Moses Mendelssohn, “Remarks Concerning Michaelis’ Response to Dohm,” 40-41


III.14 The Assembly of Jewish Notables, “Answers to Napoleon,” 152-156

XII.5 Joseph Michael Edler von Arnsteiner, “I Have Converted,” 803-804

By 11 am, bring your paper on Gartner, Chapter Four.

**Thursday, February 11**


By 11 am, turn in via Sakai Assignments your summary of the Macfarlane article.

**Tuesday, February 16**

Read Gartner, Chapter Five – “Emancipation in Western Europe, 1815-1870”

Read these documents in Mendes-Flohr & Reinharz:

III.21 Heinrich Paulus and Gabriel Riesser, “The Paulus-Riesser Debate,” 166-167

III.22 Thomas Macauley, “Civil Disabilities of the Jews,” 168-171


V.4 Johann Gottlieb Fichte, “A State Within a State,” 283-284


By 11 am, bring your paper on Gartner, Chapter Five.
Thursday, February 18
By 11 am, turn in via Sakai Assignments your summary of the Joskowicz article.

Tuesday, February 23
Read Gartner, Chapter Six – “Travail in Eastern Europe, 1815-1881”
Read these documents in Mendes-Flohr & Reinhartz:
VI.17 Fyodor Dostoevsky, “The Jews: Oppressed or Oppressors?” 313-315
VII.6 S.J. Fuenn, “The Need for Enlightenment,” 357-359
VII.7 Maskilim to Governors of the Pale, “A Jewish Program for Russification,” 359-360
VII.17 Osip Aronovich Rabinowich, “Russian Must Be Our Mother Tongue,” 378
By 11 am, bring your paper on Gartner, Chapter Six.

Thursday, February 25
Read on Sakai Resources: Adina Ofek, “Cantonists: Jewish Children as Soldiers in Tsar Nicholas’s Army,” in Modern Judaism v. 13, no. 3 (October 1993): 277-308
By 11 am, turn in via Sakai Assignments your summary of the Ofek article.

Tuesday, March 1
Review for midterm examination

Thursday, March 3
Midterm examination

Tuesday, March 8
Read Gartner, Chapter Seven – “Outposts”
Read these documents in Mendes-Flohr & Reinhartz:
IX.6 “The Constitution of the United States of America,” 506
IX.7 The Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, “Message of Welcome to George Washington,” 507
IX.8 George Washington, “A Reply to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport,” 508
IX.9 Rebecca Samuel, “An Observant Jewish Woman in America,” 509-510;
IX.12 Rebecca Gratz, “America Is Not Palestine,” 514
IX.21 “The Manhattan Beach Affair,” 527-528
IX.22 Henry Adams, “The Jews Make Me Creep,” 528-529
By 11 am, bring your paper on Gartner, Chapter Seven.
**Thursday, March 10**
By 11 am, turn in via Sakai Assignments your summary of the Rockaway and Gutfeld article.

**Tuesday, March 22**
Read Gartner, Chapter Eight – “Age of Migration and Ideologies”
Read these documents in Mendes-Flohr &Reinharz:
VI.15 Wilhelm Marr, “The Victory of Judaism over Germandom,” 306-307
VI.20 Edouard-Adolphe Drumont, “Jewish France,” 315-316
VI.22 Heinrich von Treitschke, “A Word About Our Jewry,” 319-322
VI.23 Theodor Mommsen, “Another Word About Our Jewry,” 322-325
X.6 Theodor Herzl, “A Solution of the Jewish Question,” 599-603
By 11 am, bring your paper on Gartner, Chapter Eight.

**Thursday, March 24**
By 11 am, turn in via Sakai Assignments your summary of the Freeze article.

**Tuesday, March 29**
Read Gartner, Chapter Nine – “From War to War, 1914-1939”
Read these documents in Mendes-Flohr &Reinharz:
VII.37 Joseph Stalin, “The Jews Are Not a Nation,” 409-411
XI.2 Adolf Hitler, “Mein Kampf,” 717-719
XI.20 Adolf Hitler, “A Prophecy of Jewry’s Annihilation,” 742-744
By 11 am, bring your paper on Gartner, Chapter Nine.

**Thursday, March 31**
By 11 am, turn in via Sakai Assignments your summary of the Weinberg article.

**Tuesday, April 5**
Read Gartner, Chapter Ten – “Havens and National Home”
Read these documents in Mendes-Flohr & Reinharz:
IX.45 Congressional Committee on Immigration, “Temporary Suspension of Immigration,” 568-570
X.43 David Ben-Gurion, “On the Arab Question,” 686-690
X.44 Vladimir Jabotinsky, “Jewish Needs vs. Arab Claims,” 690-692
X.45 “The Peel Commission Report,” 693-694

By 11 am, bring your paper on Gartner, Chapter Ten.

**Thursday, April 7**

By 11 am, turn in via Sakai Assignments your summary of the Arielli article.

**Tuesday, April 12**
Read Gartner, Chapter Eleven, pages 347-382 – “Catastrophe, Recovery, and Triumph”
Read these documents in Mendes-Flohr &Reinharz:
XI.23 Hans Frank, “We Must Finish with the Jews,” 750-751
XI.24 “Protocols of the Wannsee Conference,” 751-754
XI.30 Emanuel Ringelblum, “Last Letter from Warsaw,” 764-767
XI.31 Juergen Stroop, “The Jewish Residential Area in Warsaw Is No More,” 767-769
I.35 Heinrich Himmler, “A Secret Speech on the Jewish Question,” 777-778
XI.36 Rudolf Hoess, “Commandant of Auschwitz,” 779-782
XI.39 “Estimated Number of Jews Killed by the Nazis,” 787-788

By 11 am, bring in your paper on Gartner, Chapter Eleven, pages 347-382

**Thursday, April 14**
Read on Sakai Resources: Omer Bartov, “Eastern Europe as the Site of Genocide,” *The Journal of Modern History* v. 80, no. 3 (September 2008): 557-593

By 11 am, turn in via Sakai Assignments your summary of the Bartov article.

**Tuesday, April 19**
Read remainder of Gartner, Chapter Eleven, pages 383-395 - “Catastrophe, Recovery, and Triumph”
Read these documents in Mendes-Flohr &Reinharz:
IX.52 David Ben-Gurion and Jacob Blaustein, “An Exchange of Views,” 581-584
X.50 Hashomer Hazair, “The Case for a Bi-National Palestine,” 702-705
X.51 Moshe Shertok, “Bi-Nationalism Is Unworkable,” 705-706
X.53 “Proclamation of the State of Israel,” 709-710
X.54 David Ben-Gurion, “Address to the Knesset on the Law of Return,” 711-712
X.55 “The Law of Return,” 713
XII.29 Jean Amery, “Reflections of a ‘Holocaust Jew,’” 849-851

By 11 am, bring in your paper on Gartner, Chapter Eleven, pages 383-395.

Thursday, April 21

By 11 am, turn in via Sakai Assignments your summary of the Grossmann article.

Tuesday, April 26
Read Gartner, Chapter Twelve - “A New Jewish World”
Read this document on Sakai Resources: Sarah Lyall, “Who Is a Jew?”
Read these documents in Mendes-Flohr & Reinhartz:
XII.32 Arthur A. Cohen, “Why I Choose to Be a Jew,” 856-860
XII.33 George Steiner, “A Kind of Survivor,” 861-865
XII.35 Martha C. Nussbaum, “A Convert’s Affirmations,” 871-874
XII.36 Rachel Adler, “The Jew Who Wasn’t There,” 875-878

By 11 am, bring in your paper on Gartner, Chapter Twelve.

Thursday, April 28
Read Jacobson, *The Finkler Question*
Expect a quiz

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Tuesday, May 10
Final exam in our classroom from 11:30am-2:30pm