

**Professor Paola Tartakoff** (she/her)

**Office hours:** Th 12:20-1:20 and by appointment  
[paola.tartakoff@rutgers.edu](mailto:paola.tartakoff@rutgers.edu)

**Class Zoom address** (if needed):

<https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/97107471185?pwd=KzBITm1UcG0vQ2FZZnVNMDY3c25LUT09>

## **JEWISH HISTORY I: ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL**

History 506:271 / Jewish Studies 563:201 / Middle Eastern Studies 685:208

Fall 2021, M/Th (11–12:20)

Miller Hall (14 College Ave.) room 115

### **Course Description:**

This course explores Jewish life from its earliest beginnings in the second millennium BCE through the expulsion of the Jews from Western Europe in the late Middle Ages. Tracing the evolution of one of the world's oldest cultures in a global context, it examines how Jewish traditions developed in conversation with neighboring traditions; the diversity of Jewish societies, beliefs, and practices; and the influence of Judaism on Christianity, Islam, and the contemporary world. This course also introduces students to Jewish historiography, examining how scholars and communities have constructed the Jewish past and the ways these narratives shape Jewish identity. This course is required for majors and minors in Jewish Studies. No prior knowledge is required. All are welcome!



### **Core Curriculum Historical Analysis [HST] Learning Goals:**

- **K:** Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time, including the history of ideas or history of science
- **I:** Employ historical reasoning to study human endeavors

### **Additional Learning Goals:**

- Acquire an overview of major developments in the history of the Jewish people from Israel's ancient beginnings to 1492
- Understand the differences, similarities, and interactions between History and Collective Memory
- Learn to analyze primary sources critically
- Appreciate the ways Jewish culture has been shaped by other cultures as well as the ways Judaism has influenced Christianity, Islam, and the contemporary world
- Grasp the development of key Jewish texts and their roles in shaping communal identity

**Required textbook:** *The Jews: A History* (Second Edition), ed. John Efron et al. (Prentice Hall, 2009). ISBN: 0131786873

### **Grading:**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| • Class participation (attendance & engagement during class): | 10% |
| • 3 Response papers   | 45% |
| • 3 Quizzes   | 45% |

## SCHEDULE OF LECTURES and COURSEWORK

### 1. Thurs, 9/2 Introduction: course mechanics, content, and structure

- Homework:
  - Submit Student Questionnaire (in top module on Canvas)

**Mon, 9/6 NO CLASS – LABOR DAY**

### 2. Wed, 9/8 Why Study Jewish History?

### 3. Thurs, 9/9 Between Memory and History

- Homework:
  - Efron, 1-7, 51
  - Excerpts from the covenant with Abraham: Genesis, [12:1-3](#); [15:18-21](#); [17:2-9](#)

## PART I: BIBLICAL TIMES (15<sup>th</sup> c. BCE – 5<sup>th</sup> c. BCE)

### 4. Mon, 9/13 Beginnings

- Homework:
  - Efron, 8-13
  - The Exodus from Egypt: [Exodus 12:31-42](#); [13:17-20](#); [14](#)

**Thurs, 9/16 – NO CLASS – YOM KIPPUR (JEWISH DAY OF ATONEMENT)**

### 5. Mon, 9/20 The Exodus

- Homework:
  - Efron, 26-30
  - The covenant at Sinai: [Exodus 19:1-8](#)
  - The Ten Commandments: [Exodus 20:1-17](#)

### 6. Thurs, 9/23 Covenant at Sinai

- Homework:
  - Efron, 13-21
  - The covenant with David: [2 Samuel 7:3-16](#)

### 7. Mon, 9/27 The Israelite Kingdom

- Homework:
  - Efron, 21, 24-25
  - Exile as punishment: [2 Kings 17:7-14](#); [Jeremiah 2:1-20](#)
  - Start working on Response Paper 1

### 8. Thurs, 9/30 The Assyrian Invasions

- Homework:

- Efron, 25-26
- Babylonian exile as punishment: [2 Chronicles 36:14-19](#)
- Start working on Response Paper 1

### **9. Mon, 10/4 Babylonian Exile**

- Homework:
  - Use the study guide to prepare for review session
  - Submit Response Paper 1

### **10. Thurs, 10/7 Review session 1 – *Response Paper 1 due***

- Homework:
  - Study for Quiz 1

### **11. Mon, 10/11 QUIZ 1**

- Homework:
  - Efron, 33-50

## **PART 2:**

## **SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD and EARLY MIDDLE AGES (6<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE – 6<sup>th</sup> cent. CE)**

### **12. Thurs, 10/14 Return to Judah**

- Homework:
  - Efron, 52-68
  - Excerpts from the Letter of Aristeas (Canvas)

### **13. Mon, 10/18 Hellenization**

- Homework:
  - Efron, 68-76
  - [2 Maccabees 5:11-8:36](#)

### **14. Thurs, 10/21 The Maccabean Revolt**

- Homework:
  - Efron, 85-106
  - Josephus on the fall of Masada (Canvas)
  - Start working on Response Paper 2

### **15. Mon, 10/25 The Roman-Jewish Wars – *study guide for Quiz 2 posted***

- Homework:
  - Efron, 76-83, 106-48
  - Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai and the destruction of Jerusalem (Canvas)
  - Josephus on “Jewish sects” (Canvas)
  - Start working on Response Paper 2

### **16. Thurs, 10/28 Varieties of Second Temple Period Judaism**

- Homework:
  - Use the study guide to prepare for review session
  - Submit Response Paper 2

### **17. Mon, 11/1 Review session 2 – *Response Paper 2 due***

- Homework:
  - Study for Quiz 2

### **18. Thurs, 11/4 QUIZ 2**

- Homework:
  - Efron, 149-58
  - [The Pact of Umar](#)

## **PART 3: MIDDLE AGES (7<sup>th</sup> cent. – 15<sup>th</sup> cent.)**

### **19. Mon, 11/8 Jewish Institutions in Muslim Lands**

- Homework:
  - Efron, 159-60
  - A Karaite refutation of rabbinic Judaism (Canvas)

### **20. Thurs, 11/11 Jewish Diversity in Muslim Lands**

- Homework:
  - Efron, 161-76
  - Poems by Dunash ibn Labrat and Judah Halevi (Canvas)

### **21. Mon, 11/15 The “Golden Age” of Jewish Culture**

- Homework:
  - Efron, 178-90
  - [The charter of Bishop Rudiger of Speyer](#)

### **22. Thurs, 11/18 Jewish Culture in Medieval Ashkenaz**

- Homework:
  - Efron, 190-95 (and review 112-13)
  - Passion narrative from the Gospel of Matthew: Matthew 27:22-51
  - [The child murder libel: Hugh of Lincoln](#)

### **23. Mon, 11/23 Medieval Anti-Judaism**

- Homework
  - Efron, 213-16
  - [Statutes of Purity of Blood](#)
  - Start working on Response Paper 3

**Thurs, 11/25 NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING**

**Mon, 11/29 NO CLASS (Wednesday classes, instead)**

**24. Thurs, 12/2 The Conversos and the Spanish Inquisition**

- Homework:
  - [The edict of expulsion of 1492](#)
  - Start working on Response Paper 3

**25. Mon, 12/6 The Expulsion of 1492 *study guide for Quiz 3***

- Homework:
  - Use the study guide to prepare for review session
  - Submit Response Paper 3

**26. Thurs, 12/9 Review session 3 – *Response Paper 3 due***

- Homework:
  - Study for Quiz 3

**27. Mon, 12/13 QUIZ 3**

**COURSE POLICIES**

- **Attendance.** More than 3 unexcused absences will lower the final course grade (for example, from an A to a B). In order to have an absence excused, contact the professor either before or asap after the absence.
- **Late Work** will be marked down a full letter grade every 24 hours (for example, from a B+ to a C+). After one week, it will receive an F.
- **Missing Work.** Failure to turn in an assignment or take an exam will result in failure of the course.
- **Academic Integrity.** Rutgers University takes academic dishonesty very seriously. By enrolling in this course, you assume responsibility for familiarizing yourself with the Academic Integrity Policy and the possible penalties (including suspension and expulsion) for violating the policy. As per the policy, all suspected violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to):
  - Cheating
  - Plagiarism
  - Aiding others in committing a violation or allowing others to use your work
  - Failure to cite sources correctly
  - Fabrication

- Using another person's ideas or words without attribution—re-using a previous assignment
- Unauthorized collaboration
- Sabotaging another student's work in doubt, please consult the instructor

For more details, visit <http://nbacademicintegrity.rutgers.edu/home/academic-integrity-policy/>

- **Students with Special Needs.** If you need special arrangements for exams or other coursework, please contact the Office for Disability Services (<http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>) and provide the instructor with documentation as soon as possible.

### WELLNESS RESOURCES

- **Just In Case Web App:** <http://codu.co/cee05e>
- **Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)**  
(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/  
<http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/>

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

- **Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)**  
(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / [www.vpva.rutgers.edu/](http://www.vpva.rutgers.edu/)

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

- **Disability Services**  
(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide

documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

- **Scarlet Listeners**  
(732) 247-5555 / <https://rutgers.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/scarletlisteners>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.

- **Report a Concern:** <http://health.rutgers.edu/do-something-to-help/>