# JEWISH STUDIES MAJOR

**Program Director:** Maxine Grossman, Ph.D.

The Jewish Studies major provides broad training in Jewish Studies, with specializations in History, Literature and Culture, and Philosophy. Yiddish, Hebrew, and Israel Studies are important subfields. Alongside other Arts and Humanities majors, the JWST program provides training in research, analysis, and writing.

Students may choose among two tracks:

1. General Jewish Studies, 36 credits and no second language requirement
2. Language Enhanced, 39 credits, including six credits at the upper (3xx/4xx) level.

**Note:** Students who complete the language track will fulfill the Global Engagement Requirement of the College of Arts and Humanities.

## Program Objectives

The Meyerhoff Program and Center for Jewish Studies encourages research about and provides instruction in the rich history and culture of the Jewish people, from earliest times to the present day. Our regular course offerings introduce students to the Jewish Bible, the Rabbinic tradition, and modern Jewish literature and languages. Areas of particular strength among our faculty include both Hebrew and Yiddish language instruction, modern Jewish history, and cultural studies (including film and literature). Contemporary issues that matter to students -- antisemitism, diaspora studies, contemporary Jewish institutions and the nonprofit world -- are explored in seminars and lecture courses that feature small student-teacher ratios and lively discussion. Internships and independent studies provide additional opportunities for Jewish Studies majors to learn in vibrant and relevant ways.

The Jewish Studies program provides undergraduate majors with an appreciation for the interdisciplinary nature of Jewish Studies, understanding that Jewish literary texts, Jewish history, and Jewish culture and thought are, to a large degree, inseparable. In turn, this interdisciplinarity leads students to develop important professional skills in close reading, thoughtful analysis and interpretation, and intellectual problem-solving. The Jewish Studies major serves on its own as the basis for a powerful humanities education. In tandem with another major (in STEM, Business, Journalism, or Education, for example), the Jewish Studies major provides the humanistic grounding that prepares students for a career in the professions and a lifetime of intellectual exploration.

## Admission to the Major

Students will meet with an advisor to review the requirements for the major and create a four-year plan. Advisors engage with students to help them select courses that appeal to their current interests, while introducing them to new and challenging areas of study. Students pursuing the language-enhanced track will have the opportunity to test for Hebrew proficiency through the World Language Placement in Hebrew. For more information, contact hebrew-advise@umd.edu.

## Program Learning Outcomes

The Jewish Studies program seeks to provide undergraduate majors with an appreciation for the interdisciplinary nature of Jewish Studies (understanding that Jewish literary texts, Jewish history, and Jewish culture and thought are to a large degree inseparable). A student who completes the Jewish Studies major:

1. Understands the chronological development and/or major themes of Jewish history and culture.
2. Examines a historical or interpretive problem in a core field of Jewish Studies.
3. Supports the results of independent research and analysis in written form.
4. For Language Track: Interprets formal written Hebrew with critical comprehension.

# REQUIREMENTS

## Required of All Students

Jewish Studies majors in all tracks take 15 credits of coursework consisting of 12 credits of foundations (usually taken in the first two years of the major) and a capstone seminar (usually taken in the third or fourth year of the major). Up to two Hebrew or Yiddish language courses at any level can count toward the major (other languages with the written permission of JWST advisor).

| Course | Title | Credits |
|---|---|---|
| College Requirements (https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-humanities/#collegerequirementstext) | | |
| **Foundations** | | |
| One of the two following Big Question courses: | | 3 |
| JWST187 | God, Land, Power, and the People: Moral Issues in the Jewish Historical Experience | |
| JWST171 | Is Judaism a Religion? | |
| **Three of the following from at least two areas:** | | **9** |
| History | | |
| JWST231 | Jewish Texts and Cultures of the Second Temple Period | |
| JWST233 | Why the Jews? Historical and Cultural Investigations | |
| JWST275 | Urban Dreams and Nightmares: The Jewish Experience of Cities | |
| ISRL289 | New Explorations in Israel Studies (ISRL289I: The Israeli/Palestinian Conflict: Fundamental Questions) | |
| Literature and/or Film | | |
| JWST272 | Diversify and Multiply: Jewish Culture and the Production of an Identity | |
| ISRL282 | | |
| Thought, Culture, and/or Religion | | |
| JWST250 | Fundamental Concepts of Judaism | |
| JWST262 | Introduction to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament | |
| ISRL249 | Selected Topics in Israel Studies | |
| **Capstone** | | **3-4** |
| One of the following: | | |
| JWST409 | Research Seminar in Jewish Studies | |
| ISRL448 | Seminar in Israel Studies | |
| **Major Track (Select one of the following):** | | **21-24** |
| General Jewish Studies Track (21 credits; see below) | | |

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|---|---|
| Language Enhanced Track (24 credits; see below) | |
| **Total Credits** | **36-40** |

## Major Tracks

| Course | Title | Credits |
|---|---|---|
| **General Jewish Studies Track** | | |
| Area of Emphasis: Four Courses at the 300-400 Level in One of the Core Jewish StudiesAreas | | 12 |
| In-Major Electives (Three Courses in Jewish Studies) | | 9 |
| **Total Credits** | | **21** |

| Course | Title | Credits |
|---|---|---|
| **Language Enhanced Track** | | |
| Area of Emphasis | | 15 |
| Six Credits at 3XX-4XX Level in Hebrew or Yiddish [1] | | |
| Nine Credits at 3XX-4XX Level in One of the Core Jewish Studies Areas | | |
| In-Major Electives (Three Courses in Jewish Studies) | | 9 |
| **Total Credits** | | **24** |

[1] Other languages by written permission of the JWST advisor.

# GRADUATION PLANS

Click here (https://www.arhu.umd.edu/academics/advising/academic-plans/) for roadmaps for graduation plans in the College of Arts and Humanities.

Additional information on developing a graduation plan can be found on the following pages:

- http://4yearplans.umd.edu
- the Student Academic Success-Degree Completion Policy (https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/registration-academic-requirements-regulations/academic-advising/#success) section of this catalog