JEWISH STUDIES

Contact Information

Jewish Studies
http://jewishstudies.rice.edu/
225 Humanities Building
713-348-4512

Matthias Henze
Program Director
mhenze@rice.edu

Jewish Studies is an interdisciplinary field that crosses traditional boundaries between academic fields and departments. Courses in Jewish Studies allow students to study Judaism as it has evolved from an ancient set of shared religious practices into the pluralistic religion and culture that it is today. In both the humanities and social sciences, Jewish Studies broadly examines the texts, history, languages, philosophy, literature, and culture of the Jewish people from the ancient to the modern. The study of Jewish life and culture provides an opportunity to explore the continuities and diversity of Judaism as it has been lived and practiced for over three millennia all over the world.

Diversity of thought is a hallmark of Jewish culture dating back to the earliest Jewish texts, and we strive to follow this model in our courses. The diverse and interdisciplinary nature of the Program in Jewish Studies allows undergraduates the opportunity to enrich their major fields of study with a specific focus on Judaism and Jewish culture. The Program in Jewish Studies at Rice also forms an important bridge to the community, making use of the rich resources available in Houston, engaging with local institutions, and participating in timely public discussions.

Minor

- Minor in Jewish Studies (ga.rice.edu/programs-study/departments-programs/humanities/jewish-studies/jewish-studies-minor)

Jewish Studies does not currently offer an academic program at the graduate level.

Director

Matthias Henze

Professors

Matthias Henze
Michael Maas
Paula Sanders
Klaus Weissenerger
Diane Wolfthal

Associate Professors

Daniel Cohen
Gisela Heffes
Susan Lurie
Astrid Oesmann

Assistant Professors

Maya Soifer Irish
Brian Ogren

Lecturer

Melissa Weininger

Postdoctoral Fellows

Joshua Furman
Yehuda Sharim

For Rice University degree-granting programs:
To view the list of official course offerings, please see Rice’s Course Catalog (https://courses.rice.edu/admweb/!SWKSCAT.cat?p_action=cata)
To view the most recent semester’s course schedule, please see Rice’s Course Schedule (https://courses.rice.edu/admweb/!SWKSCAT.cat)

Jewish Studies (JWST)

JWST 120 - ISRAEL: LANGUAGE AND CULTURE I
Short Title: ISRAEL: LANGUAGE AND CULTURE I
Department: Jewish Studies
Grade Mode: Standard Letter
Course Type: Lecture
Credit Hours: 3
Restrictions: Graduate level students may not enroll.
Course Level: Undergraduate Lower-Level
Description: This course will combine a study of basic Hebrew vocabulary and grammar with literature, film, and popular culture from Israel. It will explore the history of Israel through a study of its culture and language, including poetry, songs, movies, and television.

JWST 121 - ISRAEL: LANGUAGE AND CULTURE II
Short Title: ISRAEL: LANGUAGE AND CULTURE II
Department: Jewish Studies
Grade Mode: Standard Letter
Course Type: Seminar
Credit Hours: 3
Restrictions: Graduate level students may not enroll.
Course Level: Undergraduate Lower-Level
Description: This course is a continuation of JWST 120, but is open to any student who can read basic Hebrew. It will explore Israeli culture through literature, music, current events, and film.
JWST 238 - SPECIAL TOPICS - BECOMING AMERICANS: THE JEWISH IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE IN THE UNITED STATES
Short Title: SPECIAL TOPICS
Department: Jewish Studies
Grade Mode: Standard Letter
Course Type: Laboratory, Lecture, Seminar, Lecture/Laboratory, Internship/Practicum
Credit Hours: 3-4
Restrictions: Graduate level students may not enroll.
Course Level: Undergraduate Lower-Level
Description: SPECIAL TOPIC FOR SPRING 2017: Becoming Americans - This course examines the history of the American Jewish immigrant experience from colonial times to the present as a means of trying to understand how newcomers navigate the processes of adaptation, acculturation, and integration into American life. We will travel to Galveston and New York City to visit significant historical sites and immigrant communities. Instructor Permission Required. Repeatable for Credit.

JWST 301 - JEWISH FOOD: RELIGION, CULTURE, AND CONSUMPTION FROM THE BIBLE TO BAGELS
Short Title: JEWISH FOOD
Department: Jewish Studies
Grade Mode: Standard Letter
Course Type: Seminar
Credit Hours: 3
Restrictions: Graduate level students may not enroll.
Course Level: Undergraduate Upper-Level
Description: "We are what we eat," the saying goes. But is that true? How do choices and practices connected to eating define us and our communities? Our study of Jewish food traditions from the Bible to the present will engage this and other important issues related to religion and identity politics. Repeatable for Credit.

JWST 318 - ISRAELI WOMEN WRITERS
Short Title: ISRAELI WOMEN WRITERS
Department: Jewish Studies
Grade Mode: Standard Letter
Course Type: Seminar
Credit Hours: 3
Restrictions: Graduate level students may not enroll.
Course Level: Undergraduate Upper-Level
Description: In the last 25 years there has been an explosion of women's poetry and fiction in Israel. In this course we will explore Israeli women's writing since the inception of the state of Israel and examine what the work of contemporary women writers means for Israeli culture, society, and politics. Cross-list: SWGS 318.

JWST 348 - SEX AND GENDER IN MODERN JEWISH CULTURE
Short Title: SEX & GENDER IN JEWISH CULTURE
Department: Jewish Studies
Grade Mode: Standard Letter
Course Type: Lecture
Credit Hours: 3
Restrictions: Graduate level students may not enroll.
Course Level: Undergraduate Upper-Level
Description: How has Jewish identity historically been constructed as gendered, and how has that affected Jewish self-perception and representation as well as the representations of others? This course explores the intersection between gender and Jewishness from several different historical and cultural perspectives, using literature, film, and philosophy. Cross-list: SWGS 348. Mutually Exclusive: Credit cannot be earned for JWST 348 and RELI 347/SWGS 347.

JWST 351 - HOLOCAUST REPRESENTATION IN LITERATURE, ART, AND FILM
Short Title: HOLOCAUST REPRESENTATION
Department: Jewish Studies
Grade Mode: Standard Letter
Course Type: Seminar
Credit Hours: 3
Restrictions: Graduate level students may not enroll.
Course Level: Undergraduate Upper-Level
Description: This course will address the representation of the Holocaust in literature, art, and film. Is the Holocaust representable? What literary and artistic techniques and devices have been employed to represent the unrepresentable? Through Holocaust narrative, poetry, fiction, art, memorials, documentary and narrative film, we will explore these questions. Cross-list: FILM 351. Mutually Exclusive: Credit cannot be earned for JWST 351 and FILM 349/RELI 349.

Description and Code Legend
Note: Internally, the university uses the following descriptions, codes, and abbreviations for this academic program. The following is a quick reference:

Course Catalog/Schedule
• Course offerings/subject codes: Courses from various subjects may apply towards this program

Program Description and Code
• Jewish Studies: JWST

Undergraduate Minor Description and Code
• Minor in Jewish Studies: JWST