

REL2J03 INTRODUCTION TO JUDAISM

Winter 2017

Professor Celia Rothenberg

UH 110

rothenb@mcmaster.ca

Ext. 24363

Office hours – by appointment

Course time and location:

Mondays, 2:30-3:20 (tutorial); 3:30-5:20 (lecture), BSB B155

Calendar description:

Survey of major facets of Jewish religion and identity from antiquity to the present, including foundational texts, major historical developments and central beliefs and practices.

Course objectives:

Course objectives include achieving:

- 1) Fluency in Jewish holidays, life cycle events, and basic terminology;
- 2) Understanding of the range and diversity of Jewish beliefs and practices;
- 3) Overview of key Jewish texts;
- 4) Familiarity with current issues in Jewish religious life;
- 5) Sharpened writing, reading, and synthesizing skills.

Required course texts:

De Lange, Nicholas. 2010. An Introduction to Judaism. 2nd edition. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Additional readings may be required; these will be available online on the course Avenue website and/or through the McMaster University Library.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Midterm: 35%

This test will be given in class. Test format will be discussed in class.

Final: 35%

The final exam will be given during exam week; its format will be discussed in class.

Film responses: 30% (6% each)

We will be watching **five films** through the course of the semester. In your film response you should include:

- (1) a brief overview of the film (approximately one to two paragraphs);
- (2) a discussion of the film (this may include issues such as what you learned; how the film contributed to/expanded upon our course material; what you found to be a weakness/strength in the film's content relevant to our study of Judaism).

Each film response should total between one and two pages, typed, and double-spaced. Each film response should be a polished, clear, and thoughtful piece of work.

Please note that I cannot arrange alternative/additional viewing times for the films. Some of the films are owned by McMaster, others are not. If you miss a film, I encourage you to see if it is owned by McMaster and, if so, arrange your own viewing time. If the film is not owned by McMaster and you missed seeing it, I encourage your creative problem solving skills to kick in.

Course schedule of readings and films:

Please note we will meet every week from 2:30-5:20.

January 9	Course syllabus overview; introductions; Q & A	
January 16	Chapters 1 and 2 (De Lange)	
January 23	Film and discussion	<i>Prince of Egypt</i> (1:40)
January 30	Chapters 3 and 4 (De Lange)	Prince film response due
February 6	Film and discussion	<i>Fiddler on the Roof</i> (3:01)
February 13	MIDTERM (Chapters 1-4)	
February 20	Reading week	
February 27	Chapters 5 and 6 (De Lange)	Fiddler film response due
March 6	Film and discussion	<i>The Chosen</i> (1:47)
March 13	Chapters 7 and 8 (De Lange)	Chosen film response due
March 20	Film and discussion	<i>Keeping the Faith</i> (2:08)
March 27	Chapter 9 and review (De Lange);	Keeping film response due
April 3	Film, discussion, Q&A	<i>Ushpizin</i> (1:30)
April 7 - noon	Ushpizin film response due via email by noon to: rothenb@mcmaster.ca	

Course policies

AVENUE TO LEARN

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

WRITTEN WORK AND LATE SUBMISSIONS

All written work will be marked on grammar, clarity of writing, and organization, as well as content and analysis. Students are encouraged to visit the Centre for Student Development to improve their essay skills (MUSC B107; x24711). For information about the Writing Clinic and the Centre's other services, visit the Centre's website: <http://csd.mcmaster.ca>.

All written work must be submitted as indicated on the syllabus, on the due date.

Late assignments will be penalized two percentage points (deducted from the overall weight of the assignment) per day, including weekends. Late penalties will not be waived unless your Faculty/Program Office advises the instructor that you have submitted to that office the appropriate documentation to support your inability to submit the work by the due date. Late assignments must be emailed to the instructors and will be penalized, if appropriate, according to the date received.

Staff in the office of the Department of Religious Studies will not date-stamp or receive papers and other assignments. Do not place papers under my office door or in my mailbox: EMAIL your papers only.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.

POLICY FOR MODIFYING A COURSE

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check her/his McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

MCMASTER STUDENT ABSENCE FORM

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work". Please note these regulations have changed beginning Spring/Summer 2015. The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid has been reduced from 5 days to 3 days. The upper limit for which an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from 'less than 30%' to 'less than 25%' of the course weight. As per the policy, students must immediately follow up with their instructors to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Failure to do so may negate their relief. If you have any questions about the MSAF, please contact your Associate Dean's office.

TURNITIN.COM

In this course we may be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students may be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity .