

Course Offerings

Please note that the **Registration deadline is May 18.**

Courses that do not meet minimum required enrollment will not be offered.

Morning Courses

(Sunday, July 12, 2pm–5pm; Monday–Thursday, July 13–16, 9am–1pm)

3001S Jewish Theology (3 quarter hour credits) [MSJS/MSJE Core Course]

Victor Mirelman

People interested in Judaism want to know about Jewish theology, i.e., they want to know which are the fundamental ideas that Judaism teaches, how those ideas and beliefs have been formulated and developed through the long history of Judaism, and how they relate to the quest for meaningful Jewish existence today. Students in this course will: understand the nature and agendas that characterize Jewish theology; learn how Jewish theological discourse has addressed the major problems that have characterized Jewish theology through the ages, i.e., from the biblical to the modern period (including: God, evil, dogma, faith, ethics, law (*halakha*), revelation, prophecy, human nature, the people of Israel and eschatology); recognize the names and significance of major Jewish religious thinkers, movements and ideologies.

5348S The Nature and Methodologies of Jewish Studies (3 qh)

[DSJS Required Course; open only to doctoral students]

Byron Sherwin

By the time a student becomes eligible to take this core course in the DSJS program, he or she has been engaged in Jewish Studies for quite some time. Yet, in all that time, he or she may not have examined two relevant and pivotal questions: (1) What is Jewish Studies? In other words, what is the *content* of Jewish Studies; what is it that Jewish Studies actually studies? (2) How does one “do” Jewish Studies? In other words, which methodologies are utilized in Jewish Studies as a whole, and in specific sub-areas of Jewish Studies, e.g., Rabbinic Literature, Jewish Theology, Modern Jewish History, Jewish Education? This course will focus on these two questions that should be of vital concern to all scholars and students of Jewish Studies.

4480S History and Philosophy of Jewish Education (3 qh)

Elliot Lefkovitz [MSJE Required Course]

This course will survey the history of Jewish education from biblical times to the present and the educational philosophy of major Jewish communities and educators throughout the ages. The course will include a general discussion of key Jewish educational content, personalities, issues and developments in the biblical,

Talmudic, medieval, Enlightenment, post Enlightenment and contemporary periods. It will identify salient educational goals, ideal characteristics of teachers and learners, ways of organizing instructional delivery, educational methodologies and curricular content for each of these periods. There will be continual analysis of reasons for changes in various aspects of Jewish education. The course will also involve the reading, analysis and interpretation of significant texts dealing with the history and philosophy of Jewish education. This is the foundation course for the Jewish education concentration area and will appeal as well to students interested in an overview of Jewish history with a focus on the ongoing interpretation of a key Jewish value and a significant factor in Jewish continuity.

4215S Aramaic Texts in Biblical, Rabbinic, and Liturgical Traditions (3 qh)

Bernard Grossfeld

This course involves a study of the Kaddish, Kol Nidre, Chad Gadya, as well selections from the Biblical book of Daniel, the Aramaic of the Midrash, Talmud, and Targum, and the Aramaic scroll of Genesis Apocryphon from Qumran, among many other examples of this ancient Jewish NorthWest Semitic Language.

Afternoon Courses

(Sunday, July 12, 6pm–9pm, Monday–Thursday, July 13–16, 2pm–6pm)

3174S How Halakhah Happens (3qh)

Barry Wimpfheimer

Halakhah is neither monolithic, self-interpreting nor an essential entity that can be simply collected and applied. Halakhah is an energized intellectual and practical discourse that has had historical and cultural variety, that is subject to the vicissitudes of its interpretive agents and that has provided a segment of Jewish culture with a canvas upon which to draw, sometimes in the indelible ink of legal power, an imaginative tapestry of Jewish meaning. In this course, we will articulate the mechanics of Halakhah. The purpose of the course is to detail the technical ways in which halakhic literatures (Bible, Mishnah, Midrash, Talmuds, Responsa and Codes) operate; to characterize Halakhah in light of its counter-discourse, Aggadah; to consider the relationship of theoretical Halakhah to the actual practice of community; to explore the specifically religious component of Halakhah as a legal system; and to discuss the complicated dynamics of Halakhah and communal authority.

3124S The History and Development of the Siddur (3qh)

Peter Knobel

The course will offer a brief historical survey of the development of the siddur (prayerbook). Beginning with the end of the Talmudic period and ending with the most recent developments in American Jewish liturgy, students will learn how place and historical circumstance changed the siddur through additions, deletions and innovations.

5141S Wisdom Literature in the Bible (3 qh)

Rachel Dulin

This course explores wisdom (*hokhmah*) as a genre of biblical literature (e.g., Ecclesiastes and Proverbs) and as a literary motif that also appears throughout the historical books of the Bible (e.g., Kings, Samuel and Ruth), providing an informative and engaging look at a central theme in biblical thought and literature.

Evening Courses

(Monday–Thursday, July 13–16, 6:45pm–9:30pm)

3114S Jewish Bio-Ethics (1.5 qh)

Hillel Gray

Thanks to advances in medicine and other life sciences, parents, patients and professionals often confront troubling ethical questions. How have Jewish ethics grappled with the complex choices made possible by modern technologies? In Jewish bioethics we encounter novel interpretations of ancient texts, varying commitments to rabbinic precedents, and a growing responsiveness to moral reasoning outside the Jewish tradition. This course will examine the history of Jewish medical ethics and its expanding scope, such as its concern for health care coverage. Students will gain an understanding of traditional methodologies as well as new critical reappraisals from the perspective of ethical theory and clinical experience. Students will investigate the application of Jewish law to contemporary biomedical judgments, including artificial insemination and high-risk surgical interventions, and emerging concerns over environmental health and genetic technologies. [*This class provides nice complement to How Halakhah Happens*]

3331S Judaism and Postmodernity (1.5 qh) [Prerequisite: Jewish Theology or permission of the instructor]

Ellen LeVee

Although personal autonomy is prevalent as a way Americans think about how they live and how American Jews think about their practice of Judaism, current social thought questions notions of personal autonomy. This course explores how Judaism accords with these postmodern perspectives, considering topics including social influences on the individual, processes of internalization, tensions between internal experience and external observance, and the creativity involved in being commanded.

Rachel Z. Dulin is Professor of Bible and Hebrew Language. Born in Israel and educated in Israel and the United States, she received her Ph.D. from Northwestern University. A dramatic and gifted instructor, she has pioneered new methods of teaching Hebrew to adults, has done groundbreaking research in the confluence of Women's Studies and biblical scholarship, and has published on biblical views of aging, including *Crown of Glory: A Biblical View of Aging*.

Hillel Gray earned his BA at Yale, his MTS at Harvard and he is in the very last stages of completing his PhD (expected June, 2009) at the University of Chicago, where he has written a dissertation entitled "Foreign Features in Jewish Law: How Christian and Secular Discourse Permeate Halakhah." Gray has held numerous fellowships, including a Harper Dissertation Fellowship, a Martin Marty Center Fellowship and a Dorot Travel Award. Mr. Gray has taught at Elmhurst College, Lewis University, DePaul University and the University of Chicago. He has worked and published in areas of policy analysis and research.

Bernard Grossfeld served for many years as Chair of Hebrew Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Ordained by the preeminent halakhist Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, Professor Grossfeld received his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University. One of the world's leading authorities on Aramaic, he has published widely on the Targum (Aramaic translation of the Bible), and is the author of many books and articles. A native of Vienna, he served as a military chaplain in the U.S. Air Force.

Peter Knobel is senior Rabbi of Beth Emet The Free Synagogue in Evanston, Illinois. Rabbi Knobel was ordained at Hebrew Union College and received his Ph.D. from Yale University. He has taught courses at Hebrew Union College, Yale University, New Haven College, University of Connecticut and Spertus Institute. Rabbi Knobel is a past president of the Chicago Board of Rabbis. He has served on numerous national boards and committees, and is chairperson of the Liturgy Committee for the Reform movement.

Elliot Lefkovitz is Professor of Jewish History and Holocaust Studies, and Jewish Education. A veteran Jewish educator who has served as director of a number of Jewish religious schools, he uniquely combines scholarship with pedagogy. Professor Lefkovitz received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan and has published studies on modern Jewish history, Jewish education, and Holocaust survivors, and has also taught for many years at Loyola University-Chicago.

Ellen LeVee received her PhD in Sociology from the University of California at Berkeley. Her areas of research interest include Sociology of Religion, Social Theory and Judaism, and Women and Judaism. She has wide ranging experience in both teaching and administration, having taught Sociology at Berkeley, lectured on Jewish texts in adult education settings, coordinated the teaching efforts of clinicians in the area of Medical Humanities and Bioethics for the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University, and instructed students in writing at the Hebrew Theological College's Blitstein Teacher's Institute. Among her publications are articles in the journal *Religion and Intellectual Life* and the book series *Lifecycles*. She has most recently served as Assistant Dean of Jewish Studies at Spertus College.

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Victor Mirelman is Professor of Jewish History at Spertus. Previously, Dr. Mirelman taught at The Hebrew University, Columbia University, and The Jewish Theological Seminary. Ordained by The Jewish Theological Seminary, he received his Ph.D. from Columbia University. He is a leading expert in the history of the Jews in Latin America and published a definitive history of the Jews of Argentina.

Byron Sherwin is Distinguished Service Professor and Director of Doctoral Programs at Spertus. He served for many years as Vice President for Academic Affairs. He was ordained a Rabbi by the Jewish Theological Seminary, where he was a protégé of Abraham Joshua Heschel. Sherwin received his Ph.D. from The Committee on the History of Culture of the University of Chicago. His fields of interest are Jewish theology, ethics, mysticism, education, and Holocaust studies. He is the author or editor of 26 books and over 150 articles, including *Toward a Jewish Theology*, *Jewish Ethics for the 21st Century*, and *Sparks Amidst the Ashes: The Spiritual Legacy of Polish Jewry*, and most recently, *Golems Among Us: How a Jewish Legend Can Help Us Navigate the Biotech Century*.

Barry Wimpfheimer is Assistant Professor of Religion and Law at Northwestern University. Previously he taught at Pennsylvania State University. He has also been a Wexner Graduate Fellow and a Harry Starr Fellow at the Harvard University Center for Jewish Studies. Professor Wimpfheimer earned his doctorate at Columbia University and he also holds rabbinic ordination from Yeshiva University. His doctoral dissertation entitled “Legal Narratives in the Babylonian Talmud” was awarded the Salo and Jeanette Baron Prize in Jewish Studies. An Associate Editor of *Prooftexts: A Journal of Jewish Literary History*, he is currently editing a Special Issue entitled “Law and Literature.” Wimpfheimer’s specialty is the Babylonian Talmud.