

## **JEWISH THOUGHT COURSE LIST – FALL 2016**

**JDS 103LEC Introduction to Judaism - Sergey Dolgopolski**

**T/TH 3:30pm–4:50pm – Fillmore 322**

Survey of Judaism and the rich Jewish legacy: basic philosophical, theological, social, and political values and practices of Judaism as they developed over time in a variety of social and political environments.

**JDS 199SEM, Modern Revolutions UB Seminar - Richard Cohen**

**T/TH 2:00pm–3:20pm – Clemens 708**

Hardly any other events in modern human history have contributed more greatly to the transformation of humanity in its economic, social and political life than the industrial revolution (steam engine, railroad, factory line), the spread of democracy (American and French revolutions) and the spread of socialism (Russian and Chinese revolutions). Revolutions opened prospects such as the universal spread of democracy, the liberal transformation of religion, the growth of a worldwide metropolitan culture, and the prospect of general prosperity. Seeking to better understand these opportunities by examining their beginnings, we will explore the old and the new in the prose and poetry of Kant, Feuerbach, Marx and Engels, Dostoevsky, Darwin, Nietzsche, and others.

**JDS 199SEM, Justice UB Seminar - Sergey Dolgopolski**

**T/TH 11:00am-12:20pm - 708 Clemens Hall**

"A law that is not just is not law" said recently a protester against racial discrimination. This argument exemplifies a problem we will address in this course through reading, discussing, theatrically staging, and critically applying the work of the best writers and thinkers, both ancient and contemporary, who addressed the problem of justice in relationship to equality, law, and freedom. In that way, we will conduct a comparative study of the relationship between justice, law, and society in pagan, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Thought.

**JDS 199SEM, Human & Animal UB Seminar - Noam Pines**

**T/TH 11:00am-12:20pm – Fillmore 328**

The course will examine various depictions of human-animal relationship in Western literature and culture, from classical times to modern times. By looking at these texts, we will chart the emergence of a figure that occupies a borderline state between human and animal, and explore its implications for our understanding of Jewish and Christian

relationships as well as human and animal nature. Readings include: Ovid, Marie de France, Hobbes, Shakespeare, Heine, Baudelaire, Tolstoy, Nietzsche, Kafka, and more.

**JDS 199SEM, The Origin of Good and Evil: Introduction to Ethical Questions UB Seminar - Alexander Green**

**T/TH 9:30am-10:50pm – 708 Clemens Hall**

Determining the origin of our moral beliefs and values is one of the central debates that has animated Western philosophers and theologians across time. Our culture may consider a certain action morally correct and another culture may consider the same action morally incorrect. Why is that? How do we know what is good and evil, right and wrong? Is there one standard that unites different value systems or are all systems equally correct and variable?

**JDS 264LEC World Music - Noam Pines**

**T/TH 2:00pm–3:20pm – Clemens Hall 202**

This course follows the careers of Jewish rebels in music, visual art, and literature in their connection to the avant-garde movements in the twentieth century. We will attempt to determine the appeal of an anti-cultural stance (such as we find in Dada, Beat poetry, and Punk) to people of Jewish heritage. Discussions will include figures such as Charles Baudelaire, Tristan Tzara, David Bomberg, Allen Ginsberg, Bob Dylan, Andy Warhol, Lou Reed, Guy Debord, Malcolm McLaren, and more.

**JDS 301LEC Psychology of Religious Ecstasy: Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll and Religion - Marla Segol**

**T/TH 3:30pm-4:50pm – 708 Clemens Hall**

This course will explore religious ecstasy, cultivated by the ritual use of sexuality, intoxicants, music and trance. These present opportunities for psychically and physically intense experiences, and they can induce [transpersonal](#) and [ecstatic states](#), as well as those of [euphoria](#), [harmonization](#) and [interconnectedness](#), sometimes called 'peak' and 'flow' experiences. We'll look at how peak and flow experiences are generated by these means, how religious institutions authorize or sanction those practices, and the ways in which they are integrated into religious canons, rituals, and lives.

**JDS 385LEC/RSP 384SEM Maimonides: The Guide for the Perplexed - Alexander Green**

**T/TH 12:30pm-1:50pm – 708 Clemens Hall**

Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed* is one of the central philosophical and theological works of the Jewish Middle Ages. It examines the conflict between the Hebrew Bible and Greek philosophy. We will consider topics such as the nature of God and prophecy; the

meaning of providence, theodicy and evil; the pursuit of wisdom and human perfection; and how to interpret the Bible. The eminent Maimonides scholar Isadore Twersky observed that “although religious rationalism did not begin with Maimonides, it came to be totally identified with him. Protagonists and antagonists would draw the lines of their positions in relation to Maimonides. To a great extent, subsequent Jewish intellectual history may be seen as a debate concerning the wisdom and effectiveness of the Maimonidean position.” We will attempt to discern Maimonides' position on the above issues and explore different ways that his thought has been adapted and criticized by medieval and modern interpreters.

**JDS 401SEM/COL 711REC-B/COL 711SEM-A Modern Streams in Judaism: Messianism and Modernity - Sergey Dolgopolski**

**WED 6:30pm-9:10pm – 640 Clemens Hall**

Selected topics in American Jewish history, from colonial to mid-nineteenth century German-Jewish immigration to later East European immigration; formation of American Judaisms; impact of America on Jews and Jews on America. This semester the course focuses on competing notions of Messianism and Messiah and their role in intellectual, ethical, and literary formation of “modernity” in 19 and 20th centuries.

**JDS 426SEM/PHI579 (#25227)/JDS426 Contemporary Political Philosophy - Richard Cohen**

**TUESDAY 4:00pm-6:50 – 141 Park**

In the late 20th century, scientific, technical and economic developments have been joined together by global financial capitalism, creating a corporate system - the "administered society" - through the alliance of positivism, instrumentalism, commodification and celebrity, reducing the real to the quantifiable, whether digits or dollars. This juggernaut has at the same time radically challenged Enlightenment political traditions, breaking the link between politics and democracy. This seminar will examine several political philosophies critical of such developments, beginning with Marx and Engels, then turning to Georg Lukacs, Rosa Luxemburg, the Frankfurt School, Herbert Marcuse, and Georges Bataille, and concluding with the more recent analyses of situationalism (Guy Debord), Jacques Rancière, and the ongoing Occupy movement. Can democracy be made viable in the age of global capitalism?

**HEBREW COURSE LIST - FALL 2016**

**HEB 101 Elementary Modern Hebrew 1 - Lilia Dolgopolskaia**

**M/W/F – 9:00am-10:25am - 708 Clemens Hall**

The beginning course of Modern Israeli Hebrew. Essentials of grammar, syntax and conversational practice; elementary reading and writing. Note: Students with other previous experience in Hebrew must take a placement exam.

**HEB 201 Intermediate Hebrew 1 (Pre-Requirement: HEB 102) - Lilia Dolgopolskaia**

**M/W – 11:00am-12:20pm - 708 Clemens Hall**

Further development of language skills: listening comprehension, oral efficiency, intermediate grammar and syntax, reading and writing. Note: Students with other previous experience in Hebrew must take a placement exam.