Religion 3212: Judaism: History, Culture, and Beliefs (H)

Instructor: Jessica Doyle

Email: Jessica.l.doyle@okstate.edu

Course Time and Location: CRN 29960 TR 1:30-4:45 CLBN 214

Office Hours: by appointment virtually (this may change)

Course Objectives: This course will give students information about the history and culture of Judaism as well as focusing on the beliefs and practices of the religion.

Required Text: *The Chosen* by Chaim Potok; *On Being a Jew* by James Kugel

Useful links: BibleGateway.com: A searchable online Bible in over 150 versions and 50 languages.

Grading: Three midterm exams will account for 15% of the final grade (each). There will be two papers, paper 1 will account for 10% of the student’s grade and the final paper will account for 20% of the student’s final grade. Book discussion weekly assignments will account for 20% of the student’s final grade. 5% of grade will be based on attendance and class participation.

Masks: Though masks have not been mandated, wearing one while in class is recommended and strongly encouraged and would be appreciated. If you are feeling sick, please do not attend class.

Classroom Procedure: Students should maintain proper behavior in this course. Interactions and discussions should be done with respect and compassion given to others.

Disability Procedures: Accommodation letters should be received by the instructor as soon as possible to ensure adequate accommodations are available.

Additional Information: Please be sure to familiarize yourself with the Syllabus Attachment at the following link. This attachment has information about Covid-19 and university policy regarding that as well as information about university policies on drop and withdrawal and university schedules.

**Spring 2022 Syllabus - As of Dec 6 2021.pdf**

Academic Integrity: All students should familiarize themselves with the Academic Integrity policy at the link provided below. This policy will be strictly enforced in this course. If you have questions or concerns about the policy, please ask before submitting any work that may cause an issue.

[https://adminfinance.okstate.edu/site-files/documents/policies/academic-integrity-policy.pdf](https://adminfinance.okstate.edu/site-files/documents/policies/academic-integrity-policy.pdf)
Course Schedule:

1/11  Academic Approach to the study of religion
       Monotheism vs Polytheism
       Historical setting of Judaism and its origins

1/13  Sacred text: Hebrew Bible and its significance, layout, organization

1/18  Introduction to the Bible as it is studied now, reasons for its significance in scholarship, associations with Old Testament, history of the people who became Jews, text criticism’s role

1/20  Cosmic creation, localized creation, Flood, history of these people being told in one of the oldest prose pieces in history, what can we determine about their God from these parts of the Hebrew Bible? What about their religion? Monotheistic?

       Psalm 82, Psalm 29 compared to Baal Epic

1/25  Developing a religious system and a genealogy
       Jacob and the 12 tribes
       Priesthood
       Priestly duties
       10 Commandments: Monotheistic?

1/27  The role of the prophet in the religion, the role of the priest, the models for each, the tabernacle, the “centralization of worship” in a nomadic people, Cohen, Levites, Nabi

2/1   Establishing a system of government, role of Samuel, strong desire for king

2/3   Role of the king, shifting role of the prophet

2/8   Kingdoms, monarchy, religion, Temple, centralization

2/10  Exam 1

2/15  Division of Kingdoms, Jews from Judah, exile, changes to religion

2/17  Role of prophets shifting, role of priests shifting, monotheism established

2/22  Life in exile, changes in centralization of religion, changes in focus of religion, life in diaspora

       Return and second temple, power under Persia, Establishing Torah

2/24  Greeks and Hellenization, Maccabees, Antiochus IV
       Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, Zealots, Sicarii, and Christianity and Judaism
3/1  Canonization of Tanakh and the process it underwent, texts that did not make it, oldest copies, Dead Sea Scrolls and their significance

3/3  Establishing a religion, basis in Talmudic study, shifting from priests to rabbis, reasons for change in leadership

3/8  Basics of Judaism as a religion of Law, etc. Basis for beliefs, Ultimate authority, Monotheism

3/10 Mishnah, Talmud, Midrash, Gemara
Rituals, Beliefs, biblical basis, religious symbolism, origins of symbols

Spring Break 3/14-3/18

3/22  Holidays, Holy days, Biblical basis

3/24  Exam 2

3/29  Judaism and death, roots in Talmud, roots in Bible

3/31  Paper 1 Due: Discuss the history of Judaism’s holidays, explain the origins of the holidays and which are biblical and which are post biblical. (3-5 Pages)
Reform, Origins, beliefs, women’s roles

4/5  Orthodox, origins, beliefs, women’s roles

4/7  Conservative, origins, beliefs, women’s roles

4/12  Kabbalah, mysticism, Hasidism

4/14  Shoah

4/19  Zionism, Israel

4/21  Exam 3

4/26  Archaeology and the Bible, implications for the religion and reactions from different groups within Judaism

4/28  Special Topics

5/6  Final Exam 2:00-3:50 Choose a topic in Judaism and discuss how that concept or idea evolved over the course of history. Explain the reasons for changes that take place related to your topic and the historical and cultural events that affected those changes. (5-7 pages)
Reading Schedule:

   On Being a Jew Part 1

Week 2: OBAJ chapters 2-6

Week 3: OBAJ ch. 7-9

Week 4: OBAJ ch. 10-13

Week 5: OBAJ ch. 14-17

Week 6: OBAJ ch. 18-21

Week 7: The Chosen chapters 1-2

Week 8: Chosen ch. 3-4

Week 9: Chosen ch. 5-7

Week 10: Chosen ch. 8-12

Week 11: Chosen ch. 13-14

Week 12: Chosen ch. 15-18

Week 13: OBAJ ch. 22-25

Week 14: OBAJ ch. 26 and Afterward

Week 15:

**Additional Notes: This syllabus is subject to change. Any major changes will communicated via email or via an updated syllabus on Canvas.**