

Jewish Studies

The Designated Emphasis (DE) in Jewish Studies provides curricular and research resources for students who want to concentrate on Jewish Studies within their respective disciplines and have their work formally recognized in their degree designation. Designed to bring together faculty and students from different departments, the DE is administered by the Graduate Group in Jewish Studies and provides a unique context for rigorous cross-disciplinary research. Students applying to the DE must be prepared to integrate high-level research in Jewish Studies into their coursework, qualifying exam, and dissertation.

In keeping with UC Berkeley requirements for a Designated Emphasis, students must be admitted to the DE prior to taking their qualifying exams. We strongly encourage students to attend an informational meeting describing the program in their first year of graduate studies and formally apply for admission to the DE in their second year. The informational meeting takes place in the Fall semester. The application deadline for the DE is in the Fall semester (the exact date is announced each Fall), with admission effective the following Spring semester.

To be admitted to the Designated Emphasis in Jewish Studies, an applicant must already be accepted into a PhD program at the University of California, Berkeley. For further information regarding admission to graduate programs at UC Berkeley, please see the Graduate Division's Admissions website (<http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/>).

Students will be required to fill out an application requesting admission to the DE, listing their prior preparation in the field, and their projected pathway through the program. In addition, they should submit a brief essay stating their academic interests and their reasons for applying, a CV, a writing sample, and a letter of recommendation from a faculty member in the student's home department indicating why and how the student would benefit from the DE in Jewish Studies.

Normative time considerations

Given the flexibility of the program, the completion of the DE will have no impact on Normative Time to degree.

Requirements for Designation

Students admitted to the Designated Emphasis in Jewish Studies must complete the following requirements before applying for their qualifying examination:

1. Students will be required to complete the course JEWISH 290 Modern Jewish Scholarship: History and Practice, which will serve as the integrative course for the program regarding methodology and research skills. This course can be offered by any faculty member of the Graduate Group in the DE in Jewish Studies. Jewish Studies 290 will likely rotate among core faculty. The course topics will thus vary in accordance with the specific expertise of individual faculty member(s). The course is worth 4 units.

The course will be a combination of standard seminar format with shared readings and discussion, and individualized research and writing. The goal of this course is thus two-fold: to build cohort cohesion and intellectual exchange across disciplines, and to provide the necessary intellectual background for top quality scholarship in the field of Jewish Studies. The course will have a strong practical component, including engagement with bibliographical resources

and scholarly practices essential to doing work in the field of Jewish Studies. A final paper will be required.

2. Students in the DE will also complete three additional course electives related to Jewish Studies, which must be approved by the Graduate Group's Curriculum Committee. These courses will support the interdisciplinary nature of the program with attention paid to the individual students' research interests. At least one of these courses must be taken in a department outside the student's major area of study or chronological period. In general, electives are graduate seminars offered in any relevant department, but an appropriate upper division undergraduate course may be approved if the student completes a graduate-level assignment for the course. One of the three electives may be fulfilled by repeating JEWISH 290, under the condition that the topic of this course differs from the previous JEWISH 290 they will have taken. Students will be provided a list of potential electives offered by the different departments sponsoring the DE. A student may also petition to the advising committee to approve a course not on the established list.

Examination

A member of the DE Graduate Group in Jewish Studies must be a formal member of the PhD qualifying examination committee. Under most circumstances, the DE graduate group member in the student's home department will serve in this function. A member of the DE graduate group may also serve as the Academic Senate representative on the qualifying exam committee if they are not a faculty member of the student's major. A Jewish Studies topic must be included as a subject on the qualifying examination. Satisfactory performance on the qualifying examination for the PhD will be judged according to the established rules in the student's major program.

Dissertation

A member of the DE Graduate Group in Jewish Studies must be a formal member of the dissertation committee. The dissertation must relate to the field of Jewish Studies.

Faculty affiliated with the DE are Lilla Balint (German); Kenneth Bamberger (Law); Isaac Bleaman (Linguistics); Robert Braun (Sociology); John Connelly (History); John Efron (History); Ron Hassner (Political Science); Ethan Katz (History); Jonathan Sheehan (History); Ronit Stahl (History); Jason Wittenberg (Political Science).

Jewish Studies

Expand all course descriptions [+]
Collapse all course descriptions [-]

JEWISH 200 Advanced Topics in Jewish Studies 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2020, Spring 2019

Graduate seminar will focus on specific areas or topics in Jewish studies through a combination of close reading of texts, student presentation, and informal lectures. Instructors and topics to vary semester to semester. Consult department website for updated course descriptions.

Advanced Topics in Jewish Studies: [Read More](#) [\[+\]](#)

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing or consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Jewish Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Advanced Topics in Jewish Studies: [Read Less](#) [\[-\]](#)

JEWISH 290 Modern Jewish Scholarship: History and Practice 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2023, Fall 2021, Spring 2021

This seminar, specifically designed as the 'integrative course' for students pursuing the Designated Emphasis in Jewish Studies, will offer an in-depth introduction to some of the central trends and personalities in modern Jewish historiography. We will read (and read about) the founders of modern Jewish historiography, and then explore some contemporary trends in Jewish scholarship, according to the disciplinary affiliations of the students in the class. Students will need to write a 5000-word article to complete the course, using a bibliography that includes Jewish Studies materials. A subject-relevant seminar paper from another course may be used to fulfill this requirement, subject to approval by Jewish Studies faculty.

Modern Jewish Scholarship: History and Practice: [Read More](#) [\[+\]](#)

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: This is the required integrative course for doctoral students pursuing the Designated Emphasis in Jewish Studies. It is open to other doctoral students by permission of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 2-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Jewish Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructor: Efron

Modern Jewish Scholarship: History and Practice: [Read Less](#) [\[-\]](#)

JEWISH 296 Jewish Studies DE Dissertation Research and Writing Credit 1 - 12 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2011, Fall 2010, Spring 2010

The course is offered to graduate students in the Designated Emphasis (DE) in Jewish studies to provide course credit for conducting dissertation research and dissertation writing, only after the student has successfully advanced to candidacy.

Jewish Studies DE Dissertation Research and Writing Credit: [Read More](#) [\[+\]](#)

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Advancement to doctoral candidacy

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-12 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Jewish Studies/Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Instructor: Kronfeld

Jewish Studies DE Dissertation Research and Writing Credit: [Read Less](#) [\[-\]](#)

JEWISH 299 Individual Study and Research - Jewish Studies 1 - 5 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2021, Spring 2014, Fall 2012

Topics and instructors will vary depending upon area of study. Special individual study for qualified graduate students only. Individual study and research, including fieldwork, in consultation with instructor on subject matter not covered in scheduled course offerings.

Individual Study and Research - Jewish Studies: [Read More](#) [\[+\]](#)

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-5 hours of independent study per week

Summer: 8 weeks - 1.5-9 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Jewish Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Individual Study and Research - Jewish Studies: [Read Less](#) [\[-\]](#)

JEWISH 602 Jewish Studies DE Exam Preparation 1 - 8 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2012, Fall 2011, Spring 2011

The course is offered to graduate students in the Designated Emphasis (DE) in Jewish studies to provide opportunities for directed qualifying exam preparation prior to advancement to candidacy.

Jewish Studies DE Exam Preparation: Read More [\[+\]](#)

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Advancement to doctoral candidacy

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-12 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Jewish Studies/Graduate examination preparation

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Jewish Studies DE Exam Preparation: Read Less [\[-\]](#)