

THE RUSSIAN JEWISH EXPERIENCE: CULTURE, MEMORY, IDENTITY

Autumn 2018

Class meetings: Mon/Wed 2:30-4:20 PM @ Denny 259

Office hours: Mon/Wed 1-2 PM, and by appointment

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“Memorials” (Grisha Bruskin, 1983)

This course offers an examination of the experience of Russian Jews from the end of the 19th century to the present, focusing on the late Imperial, the Soviet, and the post-Soviet periods. We will study the cultural artifacts dealing with the challenges of co-existence of Jews and their neighbors in the Russian Empire; we will also consider experiences of and reflections on the Bolshevik Revolution, Stalinism, the Holocaust, the post-Stalin period; the place of Jews as individuals and members of a minority group within Russian and Soviet society, ideology, and culture; migration and emigration; everyday life in Russia, the Soviet Union, and among immigrant communities in America and elsewhere at the beginning of the 21st century. We will study fiction, films, diaries, memoirs, political propaganda, music, essays, contemporary scholarship, and graphic novels.

Course materials:

A. Books (please acquire **actual paper books**—not Kindles or other electronic books—at the University Bookstore, or online; used copies are fine; bring texts to class on days we discuss them):

- Zvi Gitelman, *A Century of Ambivalence* (2nd edition, Indiana University Press, 2001)
- David Bergelson, *Judgment: A Novel* (Northwestern University Press, 2017)
- Julia Alekseyeva, *Soviet Daughter: A Graphic Revolution* (Microcosm Publishing, 2017)

B. Course reader (marked (R) in the syllabus) -- you need to bring it to class on days we discuss items from it
On sale at Rams Copy Center, 4144 University Way NE, Seattle WA 98105

C. Films: most of these should be available to stream (free) through Canvas—if I manage to obtain digital copies.

Schedule of classes and assignments:

Please complete all the reading, listening, and viewing assignments **by** the date listed below.

Note: This syllabus is subject to change. These changes, however, are highly unlikely; if they do take place, substitute texts will be similar in length to those they would be replacing.

Note: There will be additional readings, available online, that will be posted in Canvas in advance of most classes. these will be *brief* background readings, drawn primarily from various online encyclopedias (e.g. <http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/>). The purpose of these readings will be to provide some context for the literary texts, films, graphic novels that we study in this course. In other words, these background readings will not themselves be the object of our class discussions as our class is focused on the study of creative expressions of the Russian Jewish experience, but they will provide you with helpful contextualizations of the class material.

Wed, Sept 26 Intro: Russian Jews Between Imagination and Reality

- In class: Sholem Aleichem, “On Account of a Hat” (R)
- Music in class: “[A Train Across Ukraine](#)” (by Golem)

Mon, Oct 1 Challenging Tradition

- Sholem Aleichem, “Tevye Strikes it Rich,” “Today’s Children” (R)
- Zvi Gitelman, “Creativity versus Repression: The Jews in Russia, 1881-1917,”
in *A Century of Ambivalence* (pp. 1-41)

Wed, Oct 3 Minority Idiom and the Humor of the Oppressed

- Sholem Aleichem, “Hodl,” “Chava” (R)
- Zvi Gitelman, “Creativity versus Repression: The Jews in Russia, 1881-1917,”
in *A Century of Ambivalence* (pp. 42-58)

Mon, Oct 8 The Aesthetics of Violence

- Isaac Babel, “The Story of My Dovecote” (R)
- Isaac Babel, “How It Was Done in Odessa” (R)

Wed, Oct 10 On the Move: Mobility and Modernity

- Isaac Babel, “The Road” (R)
- Yuri Slezkine, “Mercury’s Sandals: Jews and other Nomads” from *The Jewish Century* (R)

Mon, Oct 15 Revolution and the Shtetl

- David Bergelson, *Judgment: A Novel* (chapters 1-11)
- Zvi Gitelman, “Revolution and the Ambiguities of Liberation”
in *A Century of Ambivalence* (pp. 59-87)

Wed, Oct 17 Bolshevik Masculinity and Revolutionary Violence

- David Bergelson, *Judgment: A Novel* (chapters 12-24)

Mon, Oct 22 Femininity, Queerness, Violence

- Watch before class: *Commissar* (on Canvas)
- Isaac Babel, “Gedali,” “My First Goose,” “The Rebbe” (R)

Wed, Oct 24 Soviet and Kosher

- Moyshe Kulbak, excerpts from *The Zelmenyaners: A Family Saga* (R)
- Isaac Babel, “Karl-Yankel” (R)

❖ **Take-home Exam #1 will be made available by / on this date.**

Mon, Oct 29 Stalin’s Zion

- Watch before class: *Seekers of Happiness* (on Canvas)
- Shira Gorshman, “High Doorsteps” (R)
- Zvi Gitelman, “Reaching for Utopia: Building Socialism and a New Jewish Culture,” in *A Century of Ambivalence* (pp. 88-114)

Wed, Oct 31 Holocaust and the Soviet “Friendship of Peoples”

- Watch before class: *Ladies’ Tailor* (on Canvas)
- Lara Vapnyar, “There are Jews in My House” (R)
- Zvi Gitelman, “The Holocaust,” in *A Century of Ambivalence* (pp. 115-143)

❖ **Take-home Exam #1 will be due on Friday, November 2, by 7 pm PST.**
Submit the exam in the designated folder through Canvas.

Mon, Nov 5 Holocaust, Revisited

- Listen: *Yiddish Glory: The Lost Songs of World War II* (translations of lyrics--R)
- Dina Rubina, “Apples from Schlitzbuter’s Garden” (R)

Wed, Nov 7 Rootless Cosmopolitans

- Ludmila Ulitskaya, “March Second of *That Year*” (R)
- Zvi Gitelman, “The Black Years and the Gray, 1948-1967” in *A Century of Ambivalence* (pp. 144-173)

Mon, Nov 12 No class: Veterans Day

Wed, Nov 14 The Jew as a Social Deviant

- Joseph Brodsky, “In a Room and a Half” (R)
- Joseph Brodsky, “December 24, 1971” from *Nativity Poems* (R)
- Zvi Gitelman, “Soviet Jews, 1967-1987: To Reform, Conform, or Leave?” in *A Century of Ambivalence* (pp. 174-195)

Mon, Nov 19 The Double Burden

- Ludmila Ulitskaya, “Genele the Purse Lady” (R)
- Yenta Mash, “On the Landing,” “Bread,” “The Payback,” “Mona Bubbe” (xerox supplement)

Wed, Nov 21 No class: Thanksgiving

Mon, Nov 26 **Soviet Jews, Saved?**

- Listen: “[Vodka & Garlic](#)” (by RotFront)
- David Bezmozgis, “Roman Berman, Massage Therapist” (R)
- Anya Ulinich, “Operation Exodus” from *Petropolis* (R)
- Anya Ulinich, excerpt from *Lena Finkle’s Magic Barrel* (R)
- Zvi Gitelman, “The Post-Soviet Era: Winding Down or Starting Up Again?”
in *A Century of Ambivalence* (pp. 212-243)

Wed, Nov 28 **Is This the Promised Land?**

- Listen: “[Inner Emigration](#)” (by Daniel Kahn & The Painted Bird)
- Watch before class: *Yana’s Friends* (on Canvas)
- Zvi Gitelman, “The Paradoxes of Post-Soviet Jewry”
in *A Century of Ambivalence* (pp. 244-274)

❖ **Take-home Exam #2 will be made available by / on this date.**

Mon, Dec 3 **Soviet Experience and the Family Narrative**

- Julia Alekseyeva, *Soviet Daughter: A Graphic Revolution*
- Gary Shteyngart, excerpts from *Little Failure: A Memoir* (R)

Wed, Dec 5 **Conclusion: Into the 21st Century**

- Watch in class: *Welcome and Our Condolences*
*** the film is 25 minutes long; the in-class discussion will model your take-home #2
- No other homework for today: get started on your take-home #2

❖ **Take-home Exam #2 will be due on Tuesday, Dec 11, at 4:20 pm PST.**

The deadline has been scheduled by the registrar as the end of our final exam; it is non-negotiable. Submit the exam in the appropriate folder in Canvas

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Before diving into details, a few words on my grading philosophy. I strongly dislike quantitative grading and, as a pedagogue, I have a relatively strong envy of my colleagues who teach at universities and colleges where qualitative grading is the norm (e.g. Hampshire College, which has no grades and relies on extensive written evaluations of students’ achievements). However, we all have to play by the rules of the University of Washington, and that means coming up with the best possible way to produce a quantitative grade for each student at the end of the course. To this end, I try to approach my courses in the following manner:

- a) I believe that, in 2018, courses in the Humanities can enormously enrich students’ professional and personal lives if they prioritize analytical thinking over rote memorization and regurgitation. As your professor in the age of readily-available and internet-searchable answers to fact-oriented questions, my duty is to teach you the skills that Google and Wikipedia aren’t good at: namely, the harder-to-define skills of critical and analytical thinking. Therefore, I approach my role as someone who is tasked not with teaching you content (or, anyway, not *only* content) but rather as someone who is genuinely and sincerely invested in using our class time and our class material to aid you in improving your critical skills in analytical thinking and concise, topical, precise expression. I design different course requirements based on this approach.
- b) I recognize that there are numerous learning styles and that no one measure of assessment will suit all students in the same way. For this reason, I aim to break down the composition of the final grade between

different kinds of assignments so as to best play to as many of my students' strengths as possible.

So, with this in mind, this is what we're working with:

Out of the total of 100 points, the final grade will consist of the following three parts

❖ Part 1. Quizzes: 38 points (2 pts per quiz, total of 19 quizzes)

These will take place during every class session starting with the second meeting of the class and running through the final class meeting of the quarter.

All quizzes are "open book": you are more than welcome (and, indeed, you are encouraged!) to keep detailed notes on all the texts you read and all the films / TV shows you watch, and to use these notes during quizzes. Whatever notes you are planning to use, must be on paper—no digital devices allowed in class (so, if you take your notes on your computer, print them out if you plan to use them in class.)

The purpose of these quizzes is to ensure that you *attentively* do all of the ongoing homework on time, don't fall behind, and are always prepared to participate in class. These quizzes will be short. Most quizzes will contain four multiple-choice and true/false questions, with an occasional short write-in, for the total of 2 points per quiz.

I've relied on this method of assessment for several years now, and I tweaked and improved it based on my students' feedback. My students' consistent feedback has been as follows: though some students find that they would rather not have regular quizzes in class, most acknowledge that these quizzes allow them not to fall behind. The major upside to having these regular quizzes is that students in my courses *never* have to memorize or cram any material because my courses don't contain more typical cumulative in-class midterms or finals for which one has to study extensively. Basically, this part of the assessment is aimed solely at making sure you *stay on top of the course material* and are *actively engaged* in the learning process—I do not design these quizzes to trick you, I design them to aid your steadily-paced learning. Think of this as a very large percentage of the final grade for doing what you should be doing in the course to begin with: completing *all* regular homework assignments on time.

If you arrive in class late or leave the class early you may end up missing a quiz, so please arrive on time. You cannot make up in-class quizzes you miss. In practice, missing more than two classes in a quarter that only has 20 class sessions means missing more than is possible to make up – hence, the quiz policy.

As a matter of policy, I will drop the lowest two grades on your quizzes (these may include the quizzes you miss due to an illness or for any other reason). You can also have additional lowest quizzes dropped if you attend extra credit events, to be announced throughout the quarter; availability of extra credit events will depend on appropriate cultural offerings that may be available at UW or in the Seattle area throughout Winter 2018. The maximum number of extra credit points, over the course of the quarter, will be limited to 5 (so, an equivalent of 2.5 quizzes).

❖ Part 2. Participation: 15 points (12 pts for in-class participation + 3 pts for office hours)

A. In-class participation (12 points)

Students are expected to be prepared for class and contribute to class discussions regularly, intelligently, and in a way informed by course assignments. All are expected to be active participants in group and partner activities. This emphasis on participation is based on the fact that a major goal of this class is to develop skills to talk and converse meaningfully on complex historical topics.

Note: students will have multiple ways in which to show that they are engaged including group work, in-class activities, and conversation / discussion. Those students who speak the most aren't necessarily the students who will be the "best" participants—sometimes the opposite is the case. However, in most cases, regular contribution to class discussions is a marker of good preparation and engagement. *In my experience, participation grades tend to be roughly similar to overall assignment averages*, as participation can only be as good as one's preparation and comprehension.

The following will typically cause the participation grade to bring the overall course grade *down*:

- Showing lack of respect for other students or the professor, including by interrupting or intimidating others, disrespectfully dominating class discussion, or making derogatory comments about individuals or groups on the basis of religion, race, class, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, gender, etc.
- Using a phone or other electronic device in class other than when required for class activities (see phone and laptop policy below).
- Consistently lacking engagement during class or during group work or class activities.

The following will typically cause the participation grade to bring the overall course grade *up*:

- Demonstrating through one's comments and class participation that one is learning from one's earlier errors or responding to feedback over the course of the quarter.
- Showing unique interest in and respect for other student's contributions and comments, building on their thoughts, and helping to create a dynamic learning atmosphere in the classroom.

Note: Not everyone starts out in the same place when it comes to class participation. I believe that class participation is a skill that one acquires, with regular practice and effort, over time—the same way that one acquires other critical skills in any given class. Participation in college classes is good preparation for discussions in other spheres of one's professional and social lives, so this is something we all get better at with practice. I am mindful of this in assessing this part of the final grade: I will pay as much attention to regular participation as I will to progress and improvement over time. **To this end, I will assign a number out of 1/2 of your possible participation points (so, out of 6) mid-way through the quarter, together on a comment on your participation. The remaining points (out of the remaining 6) will be assigned at the end of the quarter, and you'll be able to calibrate your participation in the second half of the quarter based on my comments from the first half.**

B. Attend office hours (3 points)

The remaining 3 points (out of 15) of your participation grade are basically a freebie: to receive these, you must sign up for and attend at least one 20-minute meeting with me during my regularly scheduled office hours. Office hours tend to be the most under-utilized part of a university instructor's schedule, but it's really unwise for students not to take the faculty up on the offer to meet one-on-one: in office hours, students get to know their faculty better (and vice versa), they get to discuss material relevant to the class and other intellectual matters, and to forge relationships of mentorship that could be vital to one's success in college.

I hold my office hours twice a week, on Mondays and Wednesdays, 1-2 pm, in my office in Padelford A 210 E. Occasionally, I will need to cancel some of these hours, about which I'll inform you in advance. I will set up and circulate an on-line sign-up sheet which divides up all of my office hours for the quarter into 20-minute chunks; you have to sign up for at least one at some point during the quarter and to attend it in good faith: come prepared with questions and topics you'd like to discuss, directly or loosely related to what we're doing in class (so, not only the class topics, but also: writing for class and in general, specific class assignments, discussion, things you wanted to say in class but couldn't find an opportunity to say, your own intellectual trajectory, etc.)

I encourage you to attend my office hours more than once during the quarter; after all students have claimed at least one meeting slot, other remaining slots will be available on first-come, first-served basis.

❖ Part 3. Written assignments: 47 points (2 take-home exams).

The larger number of points given to the assignment on which the student performs better, generally 22 points for exam #1 and 25 points for exam #2 (because students tend to do better on the second of the two exams).

These take-home exams are open-book exams. You will generally have as close to a week's worth of time as possible to complete each from the moment the exam is made available until the exam is due. I aim to give my students a generous amount of time to complete exams—you should use this time wisely and produce the best work possible. I

find that take-home exams, where students are asked to analyze and apply their knowledge rather than in-class exams for which students have to memorize material and study in advance, tend to produce better learning outcomes.

Details of these take-home exams will emerge during the quarter. I never start out any of my courses with a precise set of exams in mind: I design these for to each group of students, depending on how our class goes. On these take-home exams, you should expect to see some versions of assignments that we will be doing together in class (for example, analysis of specific scenes in a film, or specific lines in a short story, or a specific set of panels in a graphic novel). These exams are not papers—they will be a set of different short questions which will require a kind of micro / brief essay responses. *Exam #2 will most likely be either identical or very similar to exam #1 (save for the material that you'll be working with, which will be different):* I will give you extensive comments on your work after exam #1, so with exam #2 following the same format, you will have clear ways to improve on your earlier performance, if it needs improvement.

We will be modeling various exam questions in class throughout the semester—so by the time you take the exam, you will know exactly what kind of thinking the exam expects you to showcase. So, this all goes back to regular participation in class and regular in-class quizzes: learning ways of thinking that we'll be polishing in class is not something you can make up, so do your best to avoid missing classes.

How your final grade will be calculated:

At UW, grades are given on a 4-point scale. In this class, assignments will be graded in points. Points will add up to 100 (so, e.g., a 15-point assignment is 15% of your final grade). If you want to know how you are doing in the course, add up your points and then do the math to see what grade you would get if you get different numbers of points on the assignments left in the course. I calculate grades this way because students tend to find it easier to add points than to think in terms of percentages. The 100-point total makes it clear the relative importance of different assignments or sections of assignments.

To calculate your final grade, I will convert your total number of points (out of 100) on the UW 4.0 scale, with 4.0 equaling 98 points, which is the usual metric in the departments hosting this course.

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

Extra credit opportunities will be available throughout the quarter. These will involve attending public lectures and / or events on topics relevant to our course (e.g. Jewish culture, history, and experience, and Russian/Soviet culture, history, and experience) hosted both at the University of Washington and throughout the city of Seattle. These will be announced in class as they come up (you are also welcome to ask me about some event that you know about and I don't: ask me in advance, so that I can decide whether what you have in mind would qualify as an intellectually enriching and topic-specific event to count for extra credit). Please do not request extra credit at the end of the quarter: the idea is that you take advantage of various extra credit opportunities throughout the quarter.

Extra credit will be limited to the total of 5 points per quarter and will generally be 1 point per event (so, 1% of the final grade); you can use these points to fill in some gaps in the quiz grades that you might accumulate during the term. In addition to attending the event, you will be asked to contribute a short (1 page or about 300-350 words) written response about what you learned at the event and how this information adds to your knowledge of the topic we study in our course. I hope that offering extra credit in this fashion will incentivize students' participation in a rich set of offerings at UW and in Seattle. There is a special one-time extra credit, equivalent to 0.5 points, that is available to students who send the professor one picture of a cat—any cat you deem worthy of attention—by 11:59 pm on Sunday, September 30; send the cat pic by email to the professor (to the professor's UW email address and not through the Canvas email tool!), put "Feline extra credit" in the email's subject line (you must follow these directions precisely to receive extra credit). All additional extra credit events will be posted in Announcements and Assignments (in Canvas) as they come up, so monitor our class site.

LAPTOP AND PHONE POLICY

No phones / smart phones in class

The use of phones is not allowed in the classroom. Please switch yours off, or put it into *airplane mode* so that you will not be distracted by incoming texts. Vibrate mode is not acceptable. (Believe me, if you don't switch it to airplane mode you will be distracted—and you will distract me and other students in class).

There may be exceptional circumstances where you need to have your phone on. These will primarily relate to life's occasional unpreventable emergencies, and child and family care obligations. If this is your situation in general or on a particular class day, please tell me in advance, and be prepared to step out of the room if you are contacted. You will not be penalized for telling me or for stepping out of the room in such circumstances.

No other communication is urgent enough to interrupt you during class. You can get back to it during the break or after class is over. I'm a human being with a smartphone, too, so I know from my own experience that if my phone is on vibrate or otherwise alerting me to incoming messages, such messages will feel urgent. It is my obligation as your professor to devote the class time to you as my students; it would not be acceptable for me to use my phone during such times. I ask the same of you as students in the course.

We will take a short break about half way through each class. This is the appropriate time to use the bathroom, refill your water, or check your email, phone, Facebook, Snapchat, etc. Students who repeatedly leave at times other than this may end up missing some part of the class that's impossible to make up.

No laptops or tablets in class:

Laptops or tablets are not allowed in class unless I specifically tell you to bring them for a class activity that may need to involve computers—this means that you should have an old-fashioned paper notebook in which to take notes. All readings for the class are in non-electronic (old-fashioned paper!) format, so bring those to class.

This policy is based on compelling research showing that students learn less, enjoy classes less, and distract both themselves and others around them if they use laptops in class for note taking (even if they *only* use them for notetaking, which is rare in practice). For example, see the following articles:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2014/04/28/why-students-using-laptops-learn-less-in-class-even-when-they-really-are-taking-notes/>

<http://college.usatoday.com/2012/09/08/laptops-may-be-the-ultimate-classroom-distraction/>

<http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/the-case-for-banning-laptops-in-the-classroom>

Note: Any student who has a specific need for a computer during class (such as a need for documented learning accommodation or learning style that may require the use of specific software) should speak with me about their particular circumstances so that appropriate arrangements could be made.

I encourage you to speak with me about these requirements if they are not clear. Please communicate with me if you are having any particular problems with the course or if a simple change could go a long way. Email is the best way of doing so. I am more than willing to work with you if you take the initiative to be in touch when appropriate but I am much less flexible when I hear about problems at the last minute or after the fact. I hold regular office hours but I am also willing to meet with any of you at other times. Just let me know and we can set something up.

NOTE-TAKING

Bring a regular paper notebook to class. As is the case with the research on the negative effects of laptops in the classroom, there is now research on how taking notes by hand on paper is far more effective than turning yourself

into a transcription machine writing down every word that the professor says without processing what's being said as much as you do when you take notes on paper. For example, take a look at this:

<http://www.vox.com/2014/6/4/5776804/note-taking-by-hand-versus-laptop>

You will find it enormously helpful for your performance in class discussions, on in-class quizzes, and on take-home exams if you take good notes on homework assignments (i.e. on films you watch or on short stories or graphic novels you read). You don't want your notes to be exhaustive and take up many pages—sparse and more precise notes are much easier to navigate when you need to use them than lengthy notes. Close reading and close scrutiny of details of films and film sequences is really our task for the quarter, so you may want to structure your notes accordingly. In class, I will do my best to model good note-taking practices for you: I might make specific suggestions, on occasion, of different ways to write something down.

If you wish to take notes at home on your computers, you are, of course, welcome to do so. In this case, however, you must print these out before class if you'd like to access your notes in class—including during quizzes—given that use of laptops and smart phones is not permitted during class.

COMMUNITY STANDARDS, ETIQUETTE, AND COMMUNICATION

The Five Commandments (of our class):

(borrowed from and with the permission of UW's Professor Mika Ahuvia)

1. Thou shalt strive to create a positive learning environment for all, with respect for everyone's ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, citizenship status, sex, pregnancy, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, or veteran status.¹
2. Thou shalt use your freedom of speech and expression in a manner that is consistent with UW's values of equality and respect for all campus community members: Your need for self-expression is important, but may never come at the expense of other people's needs.²
 - a. Instructor reserves the right to move class conversations forward.
3. Thou shalt not over-generalize about any religion or religious / cultural community.
 - E.g. ~~Jews are ..., According to Christianity..., All Muslims ..., All Russians...~~
4. Thou shalt not tokenize your classmates (by expecting them to represent millions or billions of people.).
5. Thou shalt prioritize your health and well-being and your classmates' health and well-being. Reach out to your classmates and professor if you feel overwhelmed or need help.
 - a. Name & email/# of classmate _____
 - b. Name & email/# of classmate _____

¹ Executive Order No. 31: Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action in This policy is adopted in compliance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ([42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq](#)) and the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ([20 USC § 1681](#)), Title I and II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 as amended, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-11) and [45 C.F.R. Part 84](#), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ([42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq](#)), Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ([42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq](#)), [Chapter 49.60 RCW](#), and Gender Equality in Higher Education ([Chapter 28B.110 RCW](#)). For full text, see <http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/PO/EO31.html>

² See: Marshall Rosenberg and Deepak Chopra, *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life* (PuddleDancer Press, 2015).

Who is the “we” in the Jewish Studies classroom?

This course is co-hosted at the University of Washington’s Stroum Center for Jewish Studies—a premiere institution in the Pacific Northwest and a national leader in the academic study of Jewish life in its cultural, intellectual, religious, and international contexts. At the same time, Jewish Studies classes address universal questions about identity, community, and cultural adaptation over time.

The academic study of the Jewish experience is fundamentally different from the promotion of Jewish religious, cultural, or lifestyle practices: as an interdisciplinary field in the Humanities, Jewish Studies on the UW campus is open to *all* students irrespective of their background.

When the professor or students say “we” in a Jewish Studies classroom, “we” means “students in this classroom” (and “we” never means “Jews” in the context of the classroom).

Etiquette in emailing /addressing professors (for this course and your other courses)

As a rule of thumb, it’s best to use appropriate, professional language in your email with your professors. Phrases like “hey there” are not appropriate or professional. Best to begin your emails with “Dear Prof. [insert last name].”

Unless otherwise instructed by individual faculty members, you should generally refer to your professors at the university as Prof. or Dr. followed by their last name. Choosing an appropriate salutation for your professor is not simply a matter of formality, but relates to the assumptions of gender identity, marital status, and sexual orientation that many other salutations may make. Studies have shown that precisely due to such implicit cultural assumptions and, frequently, biases female faculty and faculty of color do not always get the same kind of respect and recognition in academia as white male faculty. Using Prof. or Dr. (as opposed to Ms., Mrs., Miss., or Mr. or “Hey”) is one small step towards mitigating such biases.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Religious Observances

Please communicate all anticipated absences due to religious observances at the *start* of the quarter (not the day before the holiday). As with all absences, you are expected to check with other students about what you missed and catch up on all reading and work.

Access and Accommodations

It is important to me that this course be accessible to all students. If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but are not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), you are welcome to contact DRS at 206-543-8924 or uwdrs@uw.edu or disability.uw.edu. DRS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and DRS. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law.

If you are not sure whether you will need the accommodations you have been granted or not sure whether your condition requires accommodations, it is best to err on the side of disclosure and documentation in case they do prove necessary. I will keep all accommodations confidential and will attempt to address them discretely if possible. The presence of an accommodation will have no effect on your grade.

Academic Integrity

Students at the University of Washington are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic conduct, professional honesty, and personal integrity.

Plagiarism, cheating, and other misconduct are serious violations of the [University of Washington Student Conduct Code](#) (WAC 478-120). We expect you to know and follow the university's policies on cheating and plagiarism, and the [SPH Academic Integrity Policy](#). Any suspected cases of academic misconduct will be handled according to University of Washington regulations. For more information, see the University of Washington Community Standards and Student Conduct website.

Classroom Climate

Diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences are essential to the critical thinking endeavor at the heart of university education. Therefore, I expect you to follow the [UW Student Conduct Code](#) in your interactions with your colleagues and me in this course by respecting the many social and cultural differences among us, which may include, but are not limited to: age, cultural background, disability, ethnicity, family status, gender identity and presentation, citizenship and immigration status, national origin, race, religious and political beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and veteran status. Please talk with me right away if you experience disrespect in this class, and I will work to address it in a professional and educational manner. DCinfo@uw.edu is a resource for students with classroom climate concerns.