JEWISH STUDIES, B.A.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus
End Campus: University Park

Program Description

The Jewish Studies major provides broad inquiry into the history, culture, society, literature, philosophy, politics, language, and religious beliefs of the Jewish people from Biblical times to the present. By nature interdisciplinary, and emphasizing critical thinking and global engagement, the Jewish Studies major is flexible and adaptable to a wide variety of courses of study. Students in the major must complete a total of thirty (30) credits, at least fifteen (15) of which must be at the 400-level. No more than eight (8) credits of Hebrew may count toward the 30-credit total. All students in the major must complete JST 10, an introduction to Jewish Civilization, and select from approved lists or in consultation with the Director three courses that address Jewish studies across its history:

- one course in Jewish Studies of the Ancient through the Medieval periods,
- one course in Jewish Studies of the Early Modern through the Contemporary periods, and
- one course in Jewish Studies of the Diaspora.

All students in the major are particularly encouraged to participate in a relevant internships, education abroad programs, and/or archaeological fieldwork for which course credits and scholarships are available. Penn State students also may enroll to study abroad at a university in Israel, and up to 15 credits of related education abroad courses in any country may be applied to requirements for the major in consultation with the adviser.

What is Jewish Studies?

Jewish Studies is an interdisciplinary program where students can learn about the history, cultures, literatures, and languages of the Jews. Specializations can include, but are not limited to, Modernity and the Jews; Ancient Israel, Bible, and Early Judaism; Holocaust, Anti-Semitism, and Genocide; Jews in America; Jewish Culture and Literature; Israel and Zionism; or Jewish-Christian Relations.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You want to think critically about the world we all live in.
- You have interest in experiences such as lectures, film series, symposia, discussions, and sponsored trips to museums and Jewish cultural sites.
- You hope to enrich your understanding of Jews, Judaism, and the Jewish experience.

Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have third-semester classification (http://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm).

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Jewish Studies, a minimum of 120 credits is required:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Requirements for the Major</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3 of the 24 credits for Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements are included in the Requirements for the Major, General Education, or Electives and 0-12 credits are included in Electives if foreign language proficiency is demonstrated by examination.

Per Senate Policy 83-80.5, the college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Requirements for the Major

15 of these must be at the 400-level. No more than 15 credits in courses numbered 99, 199, 299, 399, or 499 may count toward the requirements for the major.

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>JST/HEBR 10</td>
<td>Jewish Civilization</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Supporting Courses and Related Areas

Supporting Courses and Related Areas: Require a grade of C or better
Select 3 credits in Jewish Studies in the Ancient Period through
Medieval Period from approved program list or in consultation with the director
Select 3 credits in Jewish Studies from the Early Modern Period through the Contemporary period from approved program list or in consultation with the director
Select 3 credits in Jewish Studies concerned with Jewish culture in Diaspora from approved program list or in consultation with the director
Select 18 credits from Jewish Studies, Hebrew, or appropriate courses in Anthropology, Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies, Comparative Literature, English, History, Philosophy, or Religious Studies from approved program list

No more than 8 credits of Hebrew Language courses may count toward the requirements for the major.
General Education
Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required.)
• Quantification (GQ): 6 credits
• Writing and Speaking (GWS): 9 credits

Knowledge Domains
• Arts (GA): 6 credits
• Health and Wellness (GHW): 3 credits
• Humanities (GH): 6 credits
• Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS): 6 credits
• Natural Sciences (GN): 9 credits

Integrative Studies (may also complete a Knowledge Domain requirement)
• Inter-Domain or Approved Linked Courses: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements
First Year Engagement
All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement
6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements
• United States Cultures: 3 credits
• International Cultures: 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum
3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits
A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work
Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition
The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

B.A. Degree Requirements
Foreign Language (0-12 credits): Student must attain 12th credit level of proficiency in one foreign language. See the Placement Policy for Penn State Foreign Language Courses (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/advising-planning-degree-program/course-placements/placement-policy-world-language-courses/).

B.A. Fields (9 credits): Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Arts, Foreign Languages, Natural Sciences, Quantification (may not be taken in the area of the student’s primary major; foreign language credits in this category must be in a second foreign language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the first language)

Other Cultures (0-3 credits): Select 3 credits from approved list. Students may count courses in this category in order to meet other major, minor, elective, or General Education requirements, except for the General Education US/IL requirement.

Program Learning Objectives
• Critical thinking and reading skills:
  • Develop and enhance skills in analyzing texts, images and objects.
  • Learn to identify and evaluate an author’s perspective, the argument, and the use of different kinds of sources.
  • Differentiate between relevant and less relevant information.

• Research skills:
  • Understand and apply theoretical and conceptual approaches guiding research.
  • Develop questions that engage critically with a topic and devise a research strategy to analyze a certain aspect of the topic in greater detail.
  • Learn to differentiate between primary vs. secondary sources. Examples:
    • A copy of an original letter and a section of a book whose author discusses the letter.
    • A translated papyrus and a book chapter explaining the significance of papyrus.
    • A translated copy of the Israeli “Law of Return” (1950) and an academic article about the law.

• Expressive skills:
  • In both written and oral form, learn to craft a sound narrative that is backed up by sources, contains an argument, and reflects the results of the research conducted using a range of different materials.
• Be able to summarize information in a concise and accessible manner.
• **Content/Specific Jewish Studies:**
  • Develop knowledge of the evolution of different forms of Jewish life and Jewish/non-Jewish relations within various settings and time periods with a focus on cultural, religious, social and economic aspects, as well as contemporary relevance. Develop the ability to compare or explain different communities or eras.
  • Through studying Jewish experiences and Jewish-non-Jewish relations in different cultural settings over time and comparatively, learn about international cultures and civilizations to sharpen abilities to reflect on cultural differences.
  • Read and understand major Jewish texts and significance within Jewish spheres and beyond.
  • Critique stereotypes and prejudices directed against members of specific groups.
  • Develop an understanding of different conceptions of Judaism and how these relate to ideas about human existence, God, and the world.
  • Acquiring language skills in Hebrew contributes to the development of analytical and organizational skills and of intercultural skills, in regard to communication, cultural sensitivity and competence.
  • Acquire a specific skill set related to a course or sub-discipline (i.e. Archaeology, Comp. Lit., History, Political Science, Philosophy)
  • For students specifically focusing on Hebrew language:
    • The study of language reaches into culture, connecting with the cross-cultural requirement. It refines intellectual skills applicable to all areas of learning, and it explores the richness of other cultures.
    • Learning a foreign language not only implies challenging our personal and cultural ideas, but it is also a unique method to further our intellectual and personal growth.
    • Studying a language that is not our own pushes us to communicate through a great variety of sounds and letters, while providing us with a special opportunity to gain deeper insight into the practices of other individuals, places, and cultures.
    • Language learning is intimately intertwined with our cognitive abilities, such as memory and creativity, attention control and problem solving

**Academic Advising**

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee’s unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

**University Park**
**Liberal Arts Academic Advising**
814-865-2545
Use the Liberal Arts Majors and Minors web page (https://www.la.psu.edu/current-students/undergraduate-students/education/majors-and-minors/) to see the contact information for the specific adviser(s) of this program

**Suggested Academic Plan**

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2022-23 academic year. To access previous years’ suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (Note: the archive only contains suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin).

**Jewish Studies, B.A. at University Park Campus and Commonwealth Campuses**

The course series listed below provides only one of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an Academic Requirements or What If report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

**First Year**

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<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>JST 10</em></td>
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<td>Course at Any Level or Related Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Education Course (GWS)*</td>
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<td>General Education Course (GQ)+</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEBR 1</td>
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**Second Year**

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<td>General Education Course</td>
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<td>General Education Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEBR 3</td>
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<td>B.A. Knowledge Domains</td>
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**Third Year**

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READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/)

READ PENN STATE UNDERGRADUATE BULLETIN (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/)

*Note: the archive only contains suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin.**
Bachelor of Arts students must take 3 credits in Other Cultures. See your adviser and the full list of courses approved as Other Cultures courses (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-other-cultures/).

**Career Paths**

Jewish Studies offers a flexible curriculum that’s a natural complement to many other courses of study. Our graduates have gone on to work in business, education and academia, public service, museums, philanthropy, and many other fields. A Jewish Studies degree will make you more attractive to employers seeking well-rounded applicants who are globally conscious citizens and critical thinkers.

**Careers**

- Secondary and College Level Teaching
- Public Service
- The Ministry (both Jewish and non-Jewish)
- Business
- Law
- Medicine
- Archaeology

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM (http://www.la.psu.edu/current-students/cen/)

**Contact**

**University Park**

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814-863-8939
jstd@psu.edu

https://jewishstudies.la.psu.edu/