

World Religions 234 – Introduction to Judaism
3 credit hours (online)
Henry Ford Community College
Winter 2011

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Description:

This course will introduce the religion of Judaism from its inception to its modern practice in the United States. This effort will necessarily include elements of ancient history in the Near East, a probing examination of the Christian Old Testament, writings from historically significant rabbis (especially our textbook's author), and a modest inquiry into modern history.

Required Texts:

Understanding Judaism, Rabbi Mordechai Katz. Mesorah Publications, 2006. ISBN: 1-57819-518-7
Available in the HFCC store.

Any English language Christian Old Testament (is required) will be acceptable, but I recommend an NRSV version of the Bible, and highly recommend an Oxford Annotated NRSV Bible. One is available for you in the school store if you don't already own a Bible of your own. If you prefer to do your scriptural reading online:

<http://www.godweb.org/nrs/index2.htm>

Course Objectives:

We will learn of Judaism's origins and textual foundations while gaining insight into its similarities with other ancient Near Eastern oral traditions. In order to accomplish this we will analyze some key characters from the early stories, looking at the possible agendas of the scriptural authors, and learning something about the socio-geographic context out of which Judaism emerged. All of this will help us to better understand and appreciate the impact Judaism made on developments in the western hemisphere and how the west, in its turn, helped to form the Jewish identity of today; and what that means for all of us.

Subject of the Week:

1. Introduction: The 1st Covenant & the Noahide Laws (Jan 10 – Jan 16) **MLK**: Jan 17th
2. The 2nd Covenant & Human Suffering (Jan 18 – Jan 24)
3. The 3rd Covenant & the Commandments (Jan 24 – Jan 31)
4. Mesorah: *the unbroken chain of tradition* (Jan 31 – Feb 7)
5. Judaism & Other Religions (Feb 7 – Feb 14)
6. Judaism & Gender Issues (Feb 14 – Feb 21)
7. Exile & Fear of Mixture (Feb 21 – Feb 28)
8. A. Levels of Observance (Feb 28 – March 4) **Spring Break**
B. Oral Torah (March 14 – 18)
9. Never Pass-up a Mitzvah (March 21 – March 28)
10. Tzedakah: *justice as fairness* (March 28 – April 4)
11. Prayer Schedule & Types of Prayer (April 4 – April 11)
12. Hosea: *prophets and prophecy* (April 11 – April 18)
13. Research Essay Prompts available @ 9am on April 16th (start your library research) **All weekly assignments for the class are complete as of April 18th and the only work remaining is your essay** (April 18 – April 25)

14. Reading and Writing (research should be done and you should be reading the articles you have found and starting your rough drafts) **Make notes, read, compose your argument** (April 25 – May 2)
15. Research Essays are due by 11:59pm on May 5th (May 2 – May 5) **By now you have had three weeks with no additional assignments except your research essay; make sure it is completed and submitted on time.**

Grading:

There is no mid-term or final exam for this class. Rather, there are 6 short essay questions. One every two weeks, and each question has a 250-word minimum.

A new question will become available on the class website at 9:00am every other Monday starting on January 17. See the WR-234 Reading and Assignment Schedule on the class website for more details.

There is a single research-based essay explained below.

Questions are worth up to 4 points:

- 0 = a score of 0 means the answer the student provided was unacceptable.
- 1 = a score of 1 means the answer did not satisfy the minimal criteria of the question
- 2 = a score of 2 means the answer satisfied some minimal criteria, but needed more development
- 3 = a score of 3 means the answer provided by the student was acceptable.
- 4 = a score of 4 means the student has thoughtfully elucidated an answer that was everything the instructor was hoping for.

The total score for these bi-weekly assignments will add up to form 66% of your final grade.

Thus, a very lenient 18 points or higher = an (A) for 66% of your final grade.

These assignments should always meet the minimum of 250 words apiece, and they can be written using whatever program you have access to and then pasted into the response window at the WR-234 site's "Questions" link.

Research-based Essay will earn a point assessment of anywhere between 0-5. It is worth 33% of your final grade **assuming it is submitted on time and meets the minimum guidelines for being graded.** Not turning in the essay at all, or turning in an essay that does not meet the minimum guideline for grading, will result in failure of the course regardless of your cumulative grade on the bi-weekly questions.

Minimum Guidelines for Grading

The essay **must** be submitted with the student's name and a title at the top. It **must** meet the minimum of 1000 words. At the end it **must** contain a properly written list of "works cited" using MLA format. It **must** have a minimum number of 3 works cited and these works **must** be either scholarly books or scholarly articles from peer-reviewed sources located in either the HFCC or University of Michigan-Dearborn libraries and online databases (where you are allowed full access to materials using your HFCC ID). If you do not know what "peer-reviewed" means, ask a librarian. **Only after these minimum criteria are met will your paper be read by the instructor and given a grade!**

A selection of argument prompts for the essay will be become available on April 16, 2011 @ 9am.

Questions turned in late will be marked down by 1 point per day.

Late Research-based Essays may be turned in up to 48 hours beyond the due date, but each 24-hour period results in the loss of a full grade. Therefore, essays that normally would earn an "A," if turned in 1 minute to 23 hrs & 59 minutes late will earn a "B." If turned in 24 hrs to 47 hrs & 59 minutes late; they will earn a "C." Essays later than that will go ungraded and no grade on the essay results in immediate failure of the class.

Reading:

All reading for the class will come from one of three possible sources. These are:

Source A: Rabbi Katz's textbook, *Understanding Judaism*.

Source B: The Hebrew Scriptures – commonly referred to as the Old Testament.

Source C: Reading materials provided to you by the instructor or by classmates at the WR-234 website.

Participation & Drop Policy:

Students are expected to complete all weekly assignments and activities contained within this course. Penalties may be imposed, at the discretion of the individual instructor, whenever the quality of the student's work has been affected by non-participation and non-completion of course assignments and activities. The last drop date is March 30th.

Withdrawal Policy

The official college policy for the last day to withdraw from courses is two months from the start date.

Tuition Refunds

Refunds on tuition and fees (except registration fees) may be obtained on all classes of fifteen-week duration officially dropped according to the following schedule:

100% 1st week of classes

50% 2nd week of classes

No tuition refunds are given after the end of the second week of classes and no exceptions are made for students who enter late. Courses of other than fifteen-week duration have differing refund schedules. Details may be obtained in the Office of the Registrar.

Students receiving federal financial aid have additional refund options available to them. They should review the brochure Financial Aid Information Guide and Consumer Information Supplement, available in the Financial Aid Office.

Online Class Conduct Policy:

- Students at HFCC are expected to show respect for order, law, the personal rights of others, and the educational mission of the College, as well as to maintain standards of personal integrity.
- Students working online will be held to the same behavioral standards as students in traditional classrooms. Please be aware that I will be observing your threaded discussions with each other, and I will review those discussions, commenting where appropriate with the goal of helping you to better understand the course content. Specifically, you should adhere to the following guidelines:
 - a. Personal correspondence should be conducted elsewhere.
 - b. Treat and respect others as you would like to be treated.
 - c. "Flaming," an angry series of words or comments used to personally attack others who may disagree with you, is not permitted.
 - d. Take time to review the tone, language, word choice, spelling, and grammar of any written correspondence prior to sending it. You will be judged by the quality of your work.
 - e. HFCC's computer use policy is in effect. It can be found at <http://www2.hfcc.edu/resources/policy.htm>
 - f. Students are responsible for completing their own online course work.

Academic Dishonesty: (Cheating)

Henry Ford Community College considers academic dishonesty to be a serious offense. It is the policy of the College that determination of and appropriate action in respect to academic dishonesty by a student shall be a matter of individual judgment by the instructor. The instructor may administer a penalty up to and including failure in the particular course. It is the professional obligation of the faculty to enforce academic integrity in their courses. The instructor has pretty much read everything worth using in the research essay, and if you borrow ideas I'll

probably know where it's from. As for the QotWs, they're going to be so unique anyway that you'll have a hard time trying to find an answer other than your own. But for the record...

Academic dishonesty is any activity intended to improve a student's grade fraudulently.* It includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Unauthorized acquisition of tests or alteration of grades (such as the stealing of tests, test keys, or grade books from faculty offices or elsewhere, or the purchasing of tests or grade books)
2. Unauthorized use of notes, books, or other prohibited materials during an examination
3. Open cheating on an examination (such as copying from another student's paper)
4. Permitting another person to take a test in the student's place or receiving unauthorized assistance with any work for which academic credit is received
5. Providing unauthorized assistance with any work for which academic credit is received
6. Revision of graded work in an attempt to receive additional credit fraudulently
7. Plagiarism (using another person's work without acknowledgment)
8. Any other conduct intended to obtain academic credit fraudulently or dishonestly. If an instructor fails a student in a course for academic dishonesty, the instructor must immediately notify in writing the student and the registrar of the infraction, retaining copies of both notifications.

The registrar maintains a record of all such violations. If a student fails two classes as a result of academic dishonesty, he or she is dismissed from the College for two academic years. In addition, a notation of the reason for academic dismissal is placed on the student's transcript. The notation may be expunged at the discretion of the appropriate vice president if the student petitions for its removal after at least two years have elapsed since the disciplinary action. If a student believes that the accusation is false, he or she may appeal through the Student Complaint Procedure. If the appeal reaches the Student Complaint Board, the Board may consider only whether the charge is justified. The Board may not set aside or change the penalty given by the instructor unless the charge of academic dishonesty is set aside.

*Any action that violates the Student Conduct Policy and Due Process Procedure is also subject to review under that policy.

Student Support Services:

Data & Voice Administration

If you need assistance with username and password issues, please contact Data & Voice Administration at <https://dvc.hfcc.net/helpdesk/000729.htm>

Instructional Technology If you require assistance accessing UCompass Educator courses, please contact Instructional Technology at 313.845.9663, ext.4, 5, or 6 or via e-mail at signorelli@hfcc.edu or kolin@hfcc.edu. Instructional Technology is located on the lower level of the Learning Technology Center (same building as Campus Safety), room A-004.

Media Center

Located on the second floor of the Library, the Media Center is an open access computer lab where students can go to work on computer assignments, access the internet, and/or check their e-mail. For more information, you may contact the Media Center at 313.845.6386. For more information regarding Library Services, you may phone 313.845.9606. There are also publicly available computers on the first floor of the Mardigian Library at the University of Michigan-Dearborn.

Assisted Learning Services

The Assisted Learning Services Program is designed to assist physically challenged, learning disabled or academically disadvantaged students at Henry Ford Community College to overcome barriers to education through supportive services. In addition, the Assisted Learning Services Department also provides tutoring services to the general student population. Assisted Learning Services is located in the LRC (Learning Resources Center), north side (parking lot side) main level. For more information, you may contact the office at 313.845.9617 or for the hearing impaired 313.845.9804.

Learning Lab

Located on the second floor of the Learning Resource Center, the Learning Lab assists HFCC students with identifying and improving the skills necessary for success in the areas of Reading, Writing, and Math. Although operation hours may slightly vary each semester, generally, the Learning Lab is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, from 7:30 a.m. – 8:40 p.m., on Friday from 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., and Saturday from 9:40 a.m. – 1:40 p.m. For more information, contact the Learning Lab at 313.845.9643.