

Attention!

This is a representative syllabus. The syllabus for the course you are enrolled in will likely be different.

Please refer to your instructor's syllabus for more information on specific requirements for a given semester.

Hebrew 2105
ART AND ANCIENT JUDAISM
SYLLABUS

Office:

Office Hours:

Ancient Jews have sometimes been thought of as a “nation without art,” who discouraged art, iconography and the visual. However, the reality is very different. Ancient Judaism had a rich tradition of architecture, mosaic and sculptural arts, and a history of discourse on the role art and iconography should play in religious life. This course is an exploration of the nature and function of art in ancient Judaism from the standpoints of history, cultural history, and material culture. We will examine whether the image of Jews as aniconic is an accurate one and look closely at aspects of architecture in the Hellenistic and Byzantine periods, the art of the ancient synagogue, and the social location of Jewish art.

I. Texts:

- A. These required texts are available at the Student Book Exchange (SBX) on High Street and will be placed on reserve in Sullivant Library:
1. Lee I. Levine, *Visual Judaism in Late Antiquity: Historical Contexts of Jewish Art*
 2. Steven Fine (ed.), *Sacred Realm: The Emergence of the Synagogue in the Ancient World*
 3. Some readings will be available through CARMEN. These are marked with an asterisk (*).
 4. Other readings are in journals available online OSCAR through JSTOR and other services. To access these readings:
 - Log on to OSCAR at <http://library.ohio-state.edu> (You will need to log on with your password if you are off campus.)
 - Do a title search for the journal.
 - Find the listing that includes the word “(online).”
 - Follow the links to the journal, choose “browse,” and find the volume and page numbers listed in the syllabus.
 - It is recommended that you print out a copy of the article to bring to class.
 - Alternatively, you may find the printed copy of the journal in the Main Library and copy the article.
- B. There will be a few readings from the Hebrew Bible (also known as the Old Testament). It is strongly recommended that you own a good scholarly translation. The best one available is *Tanakh: The Jewish Publication Society Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. Other good ones, which contain the New Testament, are: *The New Revised Standard Bible* and the *Revised Standard Bible* (also contained in the *Oxford English Bible*); *Revised English Bible*. The *New*

International Version and the *Artscroll* edition are not recommended for this course.

II. Class requirements

A. **Preparation of assigned readings and participation in class discussion.** Much of the class time will be spent discussing issues raised by the readings, by the instructor, and by fellow members of the seminar. The extent to which you take part in informed discussion will be a significant indicator of your success in this class..

B. Students will form teams of three to present **one in-class presentation about a specific site or set of images relevant to ancient Jewish art.** These presentations will take place after spring break, on March 24 and 26. There are at least two possibilities for this presentation:

1. Present a report on a specific archaeological site, such as Dura-Europas, Bet Alpha, etc., summarizing the major finds and pointing out the most significant features of the site for the study of Jewish art. It will be based on a major publication about the site or one or two articles selected by the instructor.
2. Present a report on a specific image, motif, or architectural feature, such as the menorah, the zodiac, or the lintel. In this type of presentation you will survey the main examples of the motif or image and describe the similarities and differences between the various occurrences.

Together with the presentation, each individual student will hand in a **three-page essay**, in which he or she will reflect on the process of studying the materials, the questions the topic raises, and what that student feels is the artistic, aesthetic, or creative dimension of those sources. Details will be provided in class.

The topic and readings for the presentation **must be approved by me by the fifth week of class.** The essay should be handed in when you give the presentation.

C. **Five short (10-15 minute) quizzes** will be held at the beginning of class. In these quizzes you will be asked to identify important concepts and locations briefly. No allowances will be made for taking them afterward.

D. **A final exam**, to be held on **April 29, 2015 at 2:00** (the time designated by the registrar for final for our class period).

Please **do not schedule any travel or appointments for the dates and times of the midterm presentation and the final exam.** They cannot be rescheduled.

- E. To gain a deeper understanding of Judaism and the study of religion and how it is studied in the University, students will be required to attend a **lecture** at the University relevant to Jewish Studies and religious studies, or the history of ancient art, and to write a **one-page report** on that lecture. Events that will fulfill this requirement will be made available in class and in email messages. The report is due a week after the lecture and will count as much as one quiz.

EVALUATION

Final grades will be assigned on the following basis:

1. Class participation and willingness to learn: 25%
2. Site presentation: 25%
3. Quizzes: 25%
4. Final exam: 25%

III. PLEASE NOTE:

A. University Policy regarding academic misconduct such as cheating and plagiarism will be strictly enforced. It is important that you understand what constitutes plagiarism. Please review the student handbook for details on plagiarism and academic misconduct or online at http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp. If you have any questions, please contact me.

B. This course is designed so that much of our learning will take place in the classroom. Therefore, your attendance at classes will be critical to your success in the course. **You are responsible for information and assignments given in class, whether you were present or not.** You are allowed two unexcused absences. However, quizzes and other assignments cannot be made up. If you missed class, you may try to get in touch with me by phone, at my office, or on e-mail.

C. Any student who feels that he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss his or her specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at (614) 292-3307, or visit 150 Pomerene Hall, to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

D. This course fulfills a GE requirement in the categories of Cultures and Ideas and Diversity: Global Studies by developing students' capacities for interpreting writings from the Jewish mystical tradition and modern studies of religious experience and understanding their role in the cultures of the Mediterranean, Europe, and North America. The University's criteria for fulfilling these requirements are as follows:

Cultures and Ideas:

Goals: Students evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; and interpretation and evaluation.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students analyze and interpret major forms of human thought, culture, and expression.
2. Students evaluate how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which guide human behavior.

Diversity

Goals: Students understand the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States and across the world in order to become educated, productive, and principled citizens.

Expected Learning Outcomes (Global Studies):

1. Students understand some of the political, economic, cultural, physical, social, and philosophical aspects of one or more of the world's nations, peoples and cultures outside the U.S.
2. Students recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens.

For more information see:

<http://asccas.osu.edu/curriculum/ge-goals-and-learning-outcomes>

III. Class Schedule

Please note that **this schedule is subject to change**; you will be notified in advance. In this schedule, every capital letter (such as A or B) represents a topical unit and every Arabic numeral (such as 1 or 2) designates a class session.

A. Art and Ancient Judaism

1. Welcome 1/13
 - Guest: Professor Lynn Kaye will introduce the class
2. **1/15: NO CLASS**
3. What is Jewish Art? 1/20
 - Levine, chapter 1
 - In-class readings
4. What is Judaism? 1/22
 - Swartz, “Judaism: An Overview,” in *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (second edition).

This article is available online. To access the article:

 - Go online to OSCAR (the OSU online library catalog) and do a title search for **Encyclopedia of Religion**,
 - Click on the link for “**Encyclopedia of Religion (online)**”
 - When you arrive at the encyclopedia of religion entry click on the “**connect to web site**” link.
 - This will get you to the Encyclopedia e-book site. Click on the **eTable of Contents** and go to volume 7 to find the article.

Alternatively, the article is available in the print edition of the *Encyclopedia of Religion*, which is available in the reference section of the Sullivant Library and at the Ackerman Library. The call number is: **BL31 .E46 2005**. You may photocopy the article in the library. Please contact me if you have any difficulty finding the article,

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5. Art and Religion 1/27
 - D. Apostolos-Cappadona, “Art and Religion,” in *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (second edition).
 - M. Barash, “Jewish Iconography” and S. Fine, “Jewish Iconography: Further Considerations,” in *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (second edition).
 - Follow the instructions above and go to volumes 1 and 7 for these articles.

 6. A People without Art? 1/29
 - *Bland, *The Artless Jew*, chapters 1 and 3
 - **Quiz #1**

 7. Art and Material Culture in Daily Jewish life 2/3
 - TBA
 - This class session will involve a short field trip or guest speaker. Details to follow.
- B. Art and Jewish History**
8. The Historical Background 2/5
 - *Martin Jaffee, *Early Judaism*, 19-48

 9. Jewish Art and Architecture in the Hellenistic Age 2/10
 - Levine, chapters 2-3

 10. The Temple 2/12
 - “Temple,” in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Second Edition (online):
 - Do a title search on OSCAR for “Encyclopaedia Judaica [electronic resource]” and follow table of contents to volume 19. The Encyclopaedia is also available at the Jewish Studies section of the Ackerman Library. Please note the spelling of “Encyclopaedia” (with an **ae**) in this listing.
 - Bible, Leviticus chapter 16, 1 Kings, chapters 6-8
- C. The Rise of the Synagogue**
11. The Architecture of the Early Synagogue 2/17
 - *Sacred Realm*, chapters 1-2
 - **Quiz #2**

 12. What Happened in the Synagogue? 2/19
 - *Sacred Realm*, chapter 6
 - *Alan Mintz, “Siddur”
 - *Jewish Prayer Book (Selections)

D. Art and Magic

13. The Power of Images 2/24
- *M. Swartz, “The Aesthetics of Blessing and Cursing
 - N. Vilozny, “The Art of the Magic Bowls”
- Note: This is a special session of the course. It will be held in conjunction with Classics 7894, a seminar on magic in the ancient world. Details will be given in class.**

E. Symbols and Stories

14. The Dura-Europas Synagogue 2/26
- Levine, chapter 5
 - *Gutmann, “The Illustrated Midrash in the Dura Paintings” and “Programmatic Painting at Dura”
15. Tombs and Catacombs 3/3
- Levine, 6-8
16. The Menorah and the Date Palm 3/5
- *S. Fine, *Art and Judaism in the Greco-Roman World*, 140-163
 - *Sacred Realm*, chapter 5
 - **Quiz #3**

F. The Monumental Synagogue: Phase II

17. Judaism and the Rise of Christianity 3/10
- Levine, chapters 9-10
18. New Structures, New Sensibilities 3/12
- Levine, chapters 11-12

March 17 and 19: SPRING BREAK

19. Ritual Images 3/24
- * Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, selections
20. The Zodiac 3/26
- *Morton Smith, “Helios in Palestine”
 - *Hachlili, “The Zodiac in Ancient Jewish Art”
 - Recommended: Levine, chapter 16
 - **Quiz #4**

March 31 and April 2: SITE REPORTS

Teams of students will present their midterm site reports (see above). Background readings for these reports will be assigned to all students: **Please note: attendance is required at these class sessions, whether your team will be presenting or not.**

21. Site Reports 3/31
– Readings TBA

22. Site Reports 4/2
– Readings TBA

G. Temple and Synagogue

23. Did the Synagogue Imitate the Temple? 4/7
– *Joan Brahnman, “Sacred Space under Erasure”
– *Sacred Realm*, chapter 2

24. Temple and Synagogue: The Case of Sepphoris 4/9
– Netzer and Weiss, *Promise and Redemption*
– Levine, chapter 13
– *Fine, “Reading Holistically”

25. The Binding of Isaac 4/14
– Levine, chapter 14
– **From Dura to Sepphoris*, pp. 73-91.
– Read Genesis chapter 22 in the Bible

G. Style and Substance

26. The Late Antique Aesthetic 4/16
– *Michael Roberts, *The Jeweled Style* (selections)
– *Patricia Cox Miller, “Differential Networks”
– **Quiz #5**

H. Ancient and Modern

27. Ancient Jewish Art in Modern Art and Architecture 4/21
- Reading TBA
- Guest Lecturer: Professor Suzanne Silver, Department of Art

28. Conclusion: What was Jewish Art? 4/23
– Levine, chapter 18
– class discussion