

News for Spring 2018

The JS faculty has been working hard to keep Jewish Studies constantly developing.

Our Fall one-day Symposium (Nov 12, Sunday, 9 am to 5 pm) on "Jews in the Midwest" was a great success: over 85 people attended the 4 talks given by our invited speakers. We began the day with Tobias Brinkman (Penn State) speaking on "Western Jews, Becoming American and Embracing Modernity," then Hasia Diner (New York University) on "Immigrant Jewish Peddlers and the Founding of Midwestern Jewish Communities; after lunch, we heard Ava Kahn, an Independent Scholar, speaking about Jewish servicemen in World War I, and Lee Shai Weissbach (emeritus, University of Louisville) detailing the innovative architecture of "Synagogues in the Midwest." Finally, our own David Katzman (emeritus, University of Kansas) gave the keynote address, a summary of his encyclopedic work on "Jews in the Midwest."

As part of a larger development for Jewish Studies (more on that, later!), this semester we will be proposing a new minor: Israel Studies. This program will require 6 courses at the Junior/Senior level, something along the lines of 2 courses in modern Israeli politics, government, and/or history, 2 courses in Israeli culture, and 2 electives (for example, advanced Hebrew, modern Hebrew or Yiddish literature, or modern Jewish thought).

We already offer enough courses to fulfill this minor: for instance, one could easily satisfy a minor in Israel Studies by taking JWSH 329 Politics and Conflict in Israel and Palestine, 340 Modern Jewish Literature, 350 Contemporary Jewish Identities, 361 Jewish Film, 382 Jerusalem through the Ages, and 560 Modern Jewish Thought.

Because of recent changes in the process of developing certificates (3 courses), we are re-designing our proposals for certificates in Jewish Studies and in Holocaust Studies. And we will add a proposal for a graduate certificate in Jewish Studies.

We also continue to sponsor study abroad programs in Israel (Haifa University, Tel Aviv University, and Hebrew University in Jerusalem) and at Jewish Studies programs in other countries: check out the Office of Study Abroad: <http://studyabroad.ku.edu>.

This upcoming summer, KU JS continues to excavate in southern Israel at Tell es-Safi, the site of ancient Gath, led by Professors Aren Maeir of Bar Ilan University and our own Eric Welch. As usual, KU students will be excavating too! Check out their [video](#)!

The Program has received several donations of books on Jewish subjects; we're beginning to amass quite a library! We and the development staff of KU Libraries have been in negotiation with several prominent donors in the area to receive their libraries on Jewish topics from art to history.

Check out our [calendar page](#) for more events.

We're getting better all the time!

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