



**KU** THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

## Did you know we have a Jewish studies minor at KU?

In the past year, the Program in Jewish Studies has been growing by leaps and bounds with the arrival of two new faculty members, both of whom have created new Jewish studies courses that fulfill general education principal course requirements:

**Renee Perelmutter**, Assistant Professor of Slavic Studies and Jewish Studies, who received her Ph.D. from the University of Berkeley in 2008, and **Lynn Davidman**, Director, Robert M. Beren Distinguished Professor of Modern Jewish Studies and Professor of Sociology and Religious Studies.

We now have several courses under our own rubric (JWSH), many of which meet general education requirements. We sponsor a highly successful program in Hebrew language, and in fall 2009, we added Yiddish to our language offerings.

KU undergraduates interested in Jewish studies can pursue an interdisciplinary course of study and get credit for a minor. Courses on Jewish life and texts can enrich your understanding of major fields such as American studies, English, history, religious studies, theatre, film studies, and sociology.

## What is Jewish studies?

Among the oldest of academic interdisciplinary studies, dating back to the 19th century, Jewish studies explores Judaism as a religion, culture, and ethnicity across time and place. We analyze how the experiences and texts of the Jewish people were influenced by the surrounding cultures in which Jews lived, and how they, in turn, contributed to their own society and played a significant role in shaping human experience. The subject matter of Jewish studies makes it relevant to every department and program in the humanities and social sciences.

The breadth of Jewish studies is extensive, ranging from the ancient texts of the Bible and rabbinical scholarship to the study of European, American, Mediterranean, and Middle Eastern history, as well as the present. Jewish studies can be understood from a multitude of disciplinary perspectives such as the study of religion, literature, folklore, sociology, anthropology, psychology, political science, philosophy, modern and ancient languages, art, music, film and theatre, law, social welfare, women's studies, cultural studies, and American studies. Courses in Jewish studies can benefit students who seek to explore

their own identities or who are pursuing an interest in any aspect of Western civilization. Jewish studies, like all liberal arts fields, prepares students for graduate school and for a variety of careers.

In particular, a minor in Jewish studies can help equip students for careers in Jewish agencies, federations, and community centers, or perhaps the Rabbinate.

## How do I get into the minor?

As soon as you enroll in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, you can take Jewish studies courses. You can declare Jewish studies as your minor by filling out a Minor Declaration Form in the Jewish Studies program office.

## Contact us:

*The Program in Jewish Studies office is the source for a wealth of information on the minor, which is part the KU College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.*

**Office Manager: Karen Hummel**  
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**Web site: [www.jewishstudies.ku.edu](http://www.jewishstudies.ku.edu)**

## What resources are available for Jewish studies?

- **First and foremost, great KU people:** the faculty and staff and your fellow students.
- **Libraries.** Watson Library has strong collections in religion, American Jewish life, East European and modern Jewish history, the Holocaust, Jewish religion, and modern Jewish journals. The Moore Reading Room in the religious studies department has a readily accessible collection on Jews and Judaism and will soon house a 17-volume Hebrew and English edition of the *Zohar*, the classic mystical text. Visit [www.lib.ku.edu](http://www.lib.ku.edu) for information.
- **Other local resources** include the Jewish Heritage Video Collection at KU Hillel's Jewish Student Center, which also sponsors occasional speakers. The Lawrence Jewish Community Center sponsors the Siegfried Lindenbaum Memorial Lecture Series, which brings a speaker on the Holocaust to Lawrence every other year. The community center houses a Jewish studies reference library. The Kansas City metropolitan area regularly sponsors performances and speakers related to Jewish studies. The Jewish Museum sponsors exhibitions, and the annual Jewish Film Festival brings films and speakers to the area. The Midwest Holocaust Educational Center sponsors speakers and has research and archival sources, and the Jewish Community Center has a continuous program of interest to Jewish studies. The Western Historical Manuscript Collection at the University of Missouri-Kansas City houses the Jewish regional archives and collections.
- **Jewish Learning at KU.** KU offers several opportunities to begin or continue your Jewish learning in an academic setting. A core group of KU faculty from Liberal Arts and Sciences serves on the Jewish studies advisory committee. Along with nearly 20 KU faculty from a variety of disciplines, they teach courses that fulfill Jewish studies minor requirements. Our annual lecture series includes leading scholars and public figures associated with Jewish life, literature, thought, texts, and politics. KU Hillel offers opportunities for less formal study and social activities.



Students participate in a discussion in Lynn Davidman's class on Sociological Perspectives: Whiteness and Ethnicity.



Lynn Davidman



If you would like information on other programs at KU, contact the University of Kansas, Office of Admissions and Scholarships, KU Visitor Center, 1502 Iowa St., Lawrence, KS 66045-7576. Phone (785) 864-3911; fax: (785) 864-5017. E-mail: [adm@ku.edu](mailto:adm@ku.edu) Web site: [www.admissions.ku.edu](http://www.admissions.ku.edu)

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# JEWISH STUDIES MINOR

The University of Kansas

## Who are the faculty and what are their interests?

Our affiliated faculty have teaching and research interests in the varied fields of Jewish studies. They teach courses that count toward the minor in disciplines such as religious studies, history, English, American studies, sociology, African and African-American studies, economics, geography, anthropology, history of art, literature, musicology, political science, law, education, theatre, film and media studies, women's studies, medicine, biology, health policy and management, and the performing arts.

The faculty are prominent scholars and teachers with impressive records of publication and pedagogical credentials who are committed to working closely with individual students to help them develop their own interests and perspectives within Jewish studies.

In addition to Professors Davidman and Perelmutter, we have several other close faculty affiliates.

Professor **Sergey Dolgopolski** teaches and writes in the history of Judaism and classical Jewish literature. He combines a strong background in philosophy and literary theory with interest in the new media and their effect on contemporary religion.

Professor **Cheryl Lester**, director of the American studies program, has a joint appointment in American studies and English and a courtesy appointment in African and African-American studies. She has taught at KU for 20 years. She is a specialist in early 20th-century American literature and culture.

Professor **Henry Bial**, appointed in the Department of Theatre, teaches and writes about Jewish popular culture including film, theatre, and television.

Professor **Tamara Falicov** is the acting chair of the Department of Film and Media Studies. Her area of expertise is Latin American Cinema, with particular focus on the film histories of Argentina and Cuba. Her research interests include Latin American Jewish cinema studies.

Our vibrant Hebrew language program is anchored by **Sari Havis**, the leading modern Hebrew language educator in the Kansas City region.

Visiting lecturers include leading scholars and public figures associated with Jewish life, literature, thought, texts, and politics. Past lecturers have included leading Jewish writers and scholars such as Grace Paley, Eli Wiesel, Peter Gay, Alan Berger, Helen Epstein, Ava Kadishon-Schieber, Michael Marrus, Daniel Boyarin, Daniel Azzan Yadin, Guy Ben-Porat, Caryn Aviv, Naomi Seidman, and Ruth Behar.

The Jewish studies minor has also co-sponsored a Jewish film series on



Sergey Dolgopolski

campus, and the KU Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies has sponsored a Yiddish film series. These events help bring home to the entire KU community the artistic and intellectual vitality of Jewish culture.

## What do I have to do to complete the minor?

In addition to general College of Liberal Arts and Sciences requirements and requirements for your chosen major, the interdisciplinary Jewish studies minor requires students to take a total of 18 hours of course work consisting of the following:

- **Two JWSH Courses** (3 credit hours each) — courses listed under the rubric of JWSH.
- **Nine credit hours** from at least one department or program besides Jewish studies.
- **One 3-credit-hour course** in which the student completes a **capstone paper or project**. This course can be a JWSH class or one that is on our list of courses that may be taken for minor credit. Visit the Jewish studies Web site at [www.jewishstudies.ku.edu](http://www.jewishstudies.ku.edu) for detailed

information about course requirements. Students may also petition to have independent study or study abroad counted toward the Jewish studies minor.

- **One Hebrew or Yiddish language course** may be taken for credit toward the minor.

## Is the minor just for Jewish students?

Of course not!

All students are welcome to enroll in the Jewish studies minor. Research and teaching in Jewish studies at KU are carried out from a critical and humanistic perspective, examining Jewish texts, social life, history, and culture as well as the interactions between Jews and their neighbors from the ancient Mediterranean to today. The more diverse the community of teachers and learners, the richer our shared experience will be.

## What can I do with a minor in Jewish studies?

If you are interested in understanding major Western traditions and modern life, a Jewish studies minor adds depth and focus to any major. Most courses are

interdisciplinary, complementing more traditional single-discipline offerings. Area studies and multi- and interdisciplinary courses encourage students to understand any given human phenomenon from the perspective of more than one discipline. Students come to understand what they are learning in a broad way that crosses traditional departmental boundaries and prepares them to be citizens of the new global society. Learning is enhanced by the diversity of courses and students in the program.

Students in Jewish studies go on to graduate study in the humanities or social sciences or to professional careers in social welfare, law, business, international relations, or journalism. Indeed, Jewish studies graduates are found in every field.

## Can I get a scholarship?

For information about scholarships from KU and various outside agencies based on academic merit, diversity, major, and residence, visit the Scholarship Information for KU Students Web site at [www.scholarships.ku.edu](http://www.scholarships.ku.edu). KU's priority scholarship deadline for new first-year students is November 1; the final deadline is December 1. For new transfer students, the scholarship deadline is March 1.

## Can I study abroad?

We encourage students in the Jewish studies minor to study abroad. A semester program focusing on East Central European Jewish studies is available in Prague through CET Academic Programs, a group sponsoring many overseas programs. A summer course in Italy, "Italy: Of Gardens and Ghettos. The Jews of Italy," is offered by the University of Maryland.

KU offers semester, academic year, spring, winter, and summer break study abroad programs in more than 70 countries. The Office of Study Abroad, 108 Lippincott, (785) 864-3742, [www.studyabroad.ku.edu](http://www.studyabroad.ku.edu), administers study abroad and exchange programs in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Australia, and Europe. Courses are KU-approved and meet KU degree requirements.

## Where can I get more information?

For further information, write or call the University of Kansas, Program in Jewish Studies, Lynn Davidman, Director, Fraser Hall, 1415 Jayhawk Blvd., Room 739, Lawrence, KS 66045-7540, (785) 864-4664, fax: (785) 864-5205, e-mail: [jewishstudies@ku.edu](mailto:jewishstudies@ku.edu), Web site: [www.jewishstudies.ku.edu](http://www.jewishstudies.ku.edu).

Produced by the KU Office of University Relations, 2009.



Renee Perelmutter's students appreciate the lighter side of Jewish folklore.



Renee Perelmutter

David McKinney/KU University Relations

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