# Course Syllabus (Draft)
## KNH1311H – Dramas of Jewish Life
## Knox College
## Toronto School of Theology
## Fall 2025

## *Instructor Information*

Instructor:     Mariana Dobreva-Holder, Ph.D.
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Office Hours:    TBA

## *Course Identification*

Course Number:     KNH1311H
Course Format:     In-person
Course Name:     Dramas of Jewish Life
Course Location:     TDA
Class Times:     14:00-17:00
Prerequisites:     none

## *Course Description*

This course lays the foundation for exploration of selected areas of the Jewish past that will aid students in acquiring Jewish historical literacy. Studying Jewish history as an academic discipline is not the overriding goal of this course. Rather, it is to explore Jewish memory as a sacred concept that is rooted in Torah, liturgy, calendar, peoplehood, thought and ritual. The purpose is to strengthen the students' relationship with Jewish memory and open new ways to understand Jewish personal and collective identity as it developed over the centuries. We will then apply this understanding of Jewish memory in providing spiritual care.

## *Course Resources*

**Required Course Texts/Bibliography**

- Berlin, Adele, and Marc Zvi Brettler, eds., Michael Fishbane, senior consulting editor. (2004). *The Jewish Study Bible: Featuring the Jewish Publication Society Tanakh Translation*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. (Amazon - $60.50)
- Goodman, Martin (2019). *A History of Judaism*. New York, NY: Penguin Books (Amazon paperback $28; used from $10)
- Adler, Yonathan (2022). *The Origins of Judaism: An Archaeological-Historical Reappraisal*. New Haven: Yale University Press. (Amazon, $38.00)
- Class handouts of primary texts provided by the instructor.

Texts may be purchased from Chapters/Indigo or Amazon. Each of these books is an investment to be used following the course in your spiritual care-giving career.

## Course Website(s)

- Quercus: https://q.utoronto.ca/

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at https://q.utoronto.ca/ and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701 . Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should ask Knox College Assistant Registrar for further help.

## *Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes*

**Basic Degrees – Knox and TST**

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

| *This course has the following course-level learning outcomes* | |
| --- | --- |
| **Outcome** | **Evaluation** |
| 1. Understand the development of Judaism from biblical times to modernity and it impact on spiritual care of Jewish clients | Attendance & participation, Mid-term and Final exams. |
| 2. Understand the social, political history of Judaism and the Jewish people from its origins to today and its influence on spiritual care of Jewish clients | Attendance & participation, Mid-term and Final exams; term paper |
| 3. Understand the history of antisemitism and the precursors to the Holocaust, the spiritual care of survivors and the trauma of recent antisemitism | Attendance & participation, Mid-term and Final exams, term paper |
| 4. Understand the ancient yearning and current need for a reconstituted State of Israel in the Land of Israel and its role in the spiritual care of Jewish clients in this time of heightened social insecurity | Attendance & participation, Mid-term and Final exams, term paper |

| *A student successfully completing this course has made progress towards the following Knox College degree program learning outcomes:* | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **MDiv** | **MTS** | **MPS** |
| ☐ Interprets Scripture and Christian tradition (Reformed), using a variety of methods, sources, and norms, to preach, teach, write, and to provide care and witness. *Evaluation:* | ☒ Demonstrates knowledge at a basic level in various theological disciplines. *Evaluation:* | ☒ Demonstrates knowledge at a basic level in various theological disciplines, in the Reformed or another tradition. [* the student may come from another tradition] *Evaluation:* Exams, Paper |

| ☐ Demonstrates skills in creative, faith-centred, adaptive, and innovative leadership for current and emerging communities of faith. *Evaluation:* | ☒ Finds, selects, reads, and appropriately integrates theological information. *Evaluation:* Participation, Paper | ☒ Demonstrates knowledge and skills in spiritual care and therapy, grounded in appropriate theories, for professional practice and leadership in community and institutional settings. *Evaluation:* Participation, Exam, Paper |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Enhances the vocational and spiritual development, practices, and well-being of self and others. (See Professional and Critical Competencies.) *Evaluation:* | ☒ Engages respectfully and constructively in a theological community of scholarship. *Evaluation:* Participation, Paper | ☒ Demonstrates an appropriate spiritual and professional identity formation in relation to specialized practice. *Evaluation:* Attendance, Participation |
| ☒ Analyzes and evaluates social, cultural, and community contexts to enable communities of faith to participate in God's work and justice in a diverse and changing world. *Evaluation:* | ☒ Writes and speaks in English sufficiently well to engage in theological discourse. *Evaluation: Participation, Exam, Paper* | ☒ Writes and speaks in English sufficiently well to engage in professional practice. *Evaluation:* Participation, Exam, Paper |

## *Evaluation*

**Requirements**

**The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in three areas:**

**(1) Attendance, participation and completion of readings (50%)** In addition, students will be provided with a form that lists the readings for the course. Weekly assignments will be submitted online prior to class, and will form the basis for discussions in the third hour of class.

**(2) A midterm exam to be given in class on [date] (25%)**—Students will complete an in-class, closed book exam based on readings and lecture material from the first half of the semester.

**(3) Class presentations (25%)**—The students will make a presentation on any of the topics discussed or a topic approved by the instructor.

## *Course Schedule*

# Week 1. September 11
# Biblical Period
### Introduction
#### Syllabus Review
### Elements of Judaism
- Judaism in the first century BCE

- Historical memory

**The Biblical Period-Part 1**
- A brief history of Israel
- Israel as a Temple State
- The loss of the Temple and the transformation of Judaism

**Reading**—Berlin, et al. <u>Jewish Study Bible</u>, Exod 25--27; Numbers 28-30; 1 Kings 6:1-7:1
**Reading**—Goodman. <u>A History of Judaism</u>, 7-60

# Week 2. September 18
**The Biblical Period-Part 2**
- The Emergence of Judaism: The Hasmonean Period
- From the Temple to the Synagogue
- The Torah of Moses: Judaism in the Bible
- Interpreting the Torah (200 bce– 70 ce )
- Jews and non-Jews

**Reading**—1 Maccabees
**Reading**—Yonathan Adler, The Origins of Judaism,
**Reading**—Goodman. A History of Judaism, 60-109

# Week 3. September 25
**Forms of Judaism: Sadducees, Pharisees, Qumran, Apocalyptic**
**Reading**—Goodman. <u>A History of Judaism</u>, 110-158
Understanding diversity in Judaism.

# Week 4. October 2
**The Sages**
- Life after the Second Revolt
- The Emergence of the Rabbis
- Early Christianity—Challenges and responses

**Reading**—Goodman. <u>A History of Judaism</u>, 159-198

# Week 5. October 9
**Preoccupations and Expectations**
Purity, Sabbath and Calendar
Vows, Oaths and Asceticism
Magic, Demons and Angels
Visions and Prophecy
Eschatology and Messianism
Life after Death and Martyrdom

**Reading**—Goodman. <u>A History of Judaism</u>, 199-219

# Week 6. October 16
**Medieval Ashkenaz**

- Jewish communal life in Europe
- Image of the Jew in Medieval Christendom
- Jewish martyrdom

**Addressing Spiritual Care:** What should be our engagement with Christian clients?
**Reading**—Goodman. A History of Judaism, chapter 13-14

## Week 7. October 23

**Messianism & Eastern European Jewry**
- Waiting for the Messiah in Medieval Times
- Shabbtai Zvi
- Chassidut and Religious Change in Eastern Europe

**Addressing Spiritual Care**
**Reading**—Goodman. A History of Judaism, chapter 15

## Week 8. October 30                  Reading Week (No Class)

## Week 9. November 6

**Western European Judaism**
- Cultural Enlightenment and Political Emancipation
- Religious Responses to Modernity

**Impact of Modernity in Eastern Europe**
- Haskalah and its opponents
- Radical Haskalah to Zionism

**Addressing Spiritual Care**
**Reading**—Goodman. A History of Judaism, chapter 16

## Week 10. November 13

**The Holocaust**
- Nazi Ideology and Practice
- Contrasting Jewish Experiences of the Holocaust

**Addressing Spiritual Care:** How do we support Holocaust survivors?

## Week 11. November 20

**Jews in Israel**
- The Yishuv
- Shivat Zion
- The Modern State

**Addressing Spiritual Care:** Is Israel important to modern Jews and what is its role in spiritual care if it is?

Readings—Barnavi. Historical Atlas,
   Bohnke, An Introduction to the Jewish History, chapter 9
   Cantor. The Sacred Chain, chapter 11
   Goodman. A History of Judaism, chapter 16
   Gribetz, et al. The Timetables of Jewish History

## Week 12. November 27

**North American Jewry**
- Immigrant life in the US and Canada
- Zionism in North America

**Addressing Spiritual Care:** How should Jews fit or stand out in Canada and how does this impact the spiritual care they (should) receive?

Reading—Goodman. A History of Judaism, chapter 17-20


## Week 13. December 4

Class presentations

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**Grading System - Basic Degree Students**

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

| | |
|---|---|
| 90-100 (A+) | Exceptional |
| 85-89 (A) | Outstanding |
| 80-84 (A-) | Excellent |
| 77-79 (B+) | Very Good |
| 73-76 (B) | Good |
| 70-72 (B-) | Acceptable |
| 0-69 (FZ) | Failure |

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

*Late work (BD).* Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. [The instructor should stipulate the penalty for late work.] The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

This penalty is not applied to students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness); students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor and request an SDF. The absolute deadline for obtaining an SDF for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of exam week in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

*Course grades.* Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply

with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/ secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-26-2012, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

## *Policies*

*Accessibility.* Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

*Plagiarism*. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks linked from http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019. A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library_archives/theological_resources/theological_guides/avoiding_plagiarism.html

*Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools.* The use of generative artificial intelligence tools or apps for assignments in this course is **strictly prohibited**. This includes tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Microsoft Copilot and other AI writing or coding assistants. Representing as one's own an idea, or expression of an idea that was AI-generated is considered a serious academic offense. The pedagogical goals of this course are centered around developing your critical thinking and analytical skills, as well as the ability to independently read, interpret, and engage the literature. All work must reflect your own reading, understanding, and analysis of the course materials. For these reasons, any use of generative AI tools in assignments will be considered a violation of course policy. Assignments that are composed with AI assistants will receive no credit.

*Other academic offences*. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019 .

*Back-up copies*.  Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

*Obligation to check email.* At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN

system. Information is available at [www.utorid.utoronto.ca](http://www.utorid.utoronto.ca). The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. Students should check utoronto email regularly for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

***Email communication with the course instructor***.   The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs.  Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.