

Course Syllabus
Jews, Christians and Christian-Jews. An Introduction to Judaism for Christians
Toronto School of Theology
Summer 2020

Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr Andrew Barron, Adjunct Professor
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Course Identification

Course Number: WYT2801H
Course Format: This is a remote course. Each week a video will be posted. Students are required to watch the video, read the assigned readings and then engage in both the discussion board and the synchronous Zoom sessions. The delivery of this course will be primarily asynchronous to provide flexibility for students. 6 out of 8 weeks students will be given the opportunity to participate in a live, synchronous discussion. Participation in this discussion is required at least 3 times over the 8-week course. If a student *cannot* accommodate this due to their schedule, they must contact the course professor to arrange an alternative assignment.

Synchronous discussion will be on Fridays in week 3-8 @ either 8 AM or 4 pm for one hour

Students should expect the weekly workload to be larger than a normal 12-week course because this course has been condensed into an 8-week format.

Class participation and discussion will primarily occur online using discussion forums several times a week. Because of the nature of the course and the importance of online discussion for creating a learning community, late posts for online discussion will not be accepted.

Course Name: Jews, Christians and Christian-Jews. An Introduction to Judaism for Christians
Class Times: May 18-July 10.

Prerequisites: None

Course Description

The course explores Judaism in terms of the intersection of Jewish and Christian faith. This course will explore Jewish origins of the Christian movement, its modern counterpart in the Modern Messianic Jewish Movement, and the context out of which both movements emerged. The course will examine the origins of rabbinic Judaism and how it developed in conversation with Christianity. It will survey Jewish history and the evolution of rabbinic Judaism. We will discuss contemporary Jewish beliefs, practices, culture, and identity in North America explored through a Christian lens. Special attention will be given to the Canadian Jewish community, her relationship with the Church, and ways Christian faith may be deepened through positive engagement with the Jewish community and appreciation of Christianity's Jewish origins.

I will post a brief video each week highlighting what the students should look for in the lectures and readings.

Course Resources

Course Texts/Bibliography

- Cohn-Sherbok D. *Judaism: History, Belief, and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2003)
- Wouk, Herman. *This is My God* (Boston: Little Brown and Co, 1987)
- Brenner, Michael. *A Short History of the Jews*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2010)

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Basic Degree Level

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, a student should be able to:

Assignment	CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES
1. Identify significant events of Jewish history and assess ways these experiences shaped Jewish and Christian belief and culture.	In the research paper, students will study a significant event in Jewish history, understanding how this event shaped Jewish belief, culture, and perspective.

Assignment	CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES
<p>2. Appraise twenty central beliefs of rabbinic Judaism; select and describe twenty of Judaism's most important practices; finally, compare and contrast seven different expressions of Judaism practiced in North America in the 21st Century.</p>	<p>Students will prepare and upload a presentation to Quercus in which they will study and prepare a report on a specific Jewish community in North America and describe their practices, beliefs, and institutions. They will explain how this community interprets Judaism and ways they are distinct.</p>
<p>3. Analyze the contemporary Jewish and messianic Jewish communities in North America identifying ten important institutions, comparing their cultures, and discussing twenty social values they share.</p>	<p>Students will prepare and upload a presentation to Quercus in which they explore and prepare a report on a specific contemporary community in North America, and describe for the class its culture, institutions, and social values.</p>
<p>3. Argue for ten ways Jewish history, thought, and religion are important in understanding Christian faith, and propose three implications for Jewish-Christian engagement</p>	<p>In the research paper and students will describe implications for Jewish-Christian engagement.</p> <p>Moreover, In the book review, students will explore and evaluate one scholar's approach to Jewish-Christian engagement and the value of understanding the Jewish roots of the Christian movement.</p>
<p>4. Justify through written qualitative reflection during the course, and peer interactions, affection for Jewish people, their culture, and Jewish practice.</p>	<p>Students will demonstrate the growth of their affection through their reflections in the field report, their review and discussion of the work on Jewish-Christian engagement, and their reflections in their presentation.</p>

Evaluation

Evaluation

Requirements

1. Reading through PowerPoint lectures, assigned readings, and discussion forum participation (30%). Each week (excluding Week 5) students will be required to engage in an online discussion forum. Students must respond to the question posted in the discussion forum by Thursday of each week. They must post two follow up responses by Saturday.

Guidelines for online discussion (these guidelines will form the basis for grading)

- a. Students can post a written or video-recorded response (using Quercus's video recording feature)
 - a. If written: Each post should be between 250-500 words
 - b. If video-recorded: Video should be between 2-5 minutes.
- b. Initial posts are due by Thursday at Midnight.
- c. Follow-up posts are due by Saturday at Midnight.
- d. Posts should reflect significant engagement with PowerPoint lectures and readings. An excellent post will also draw on prior knowledge and incorporate it into the discussion.
- e. Posts should advance the discussion. Avoid simply statements such as, "I agree" or "Good Idea."
- f. Posts should be written or recorded in good English style.

2. Participation in Synchronous Discussion (10%): In weeks 1-4, 6-7, the professor will host a synchronous discussion opportunity for students to join. Students must attend at least three of these opportunities.

3. Book Review (10%) Students will read and review one of the required course text books. Reviews should include a brief summary of the thesis of the book, a presentation of key ideas and themes the author uses to develop his or her thesis, and a critical evaluation of the argument presented. Book reviews should be between 800-1000 words. **Book Reviews are due at the end of Week 8 on July 10.**

4. Student Presentation (20%): On a North American Jewish Community, Their Institutions, Culture, and Social Values: Student must prepare a short presentation on a North American Jewish Community. The presentation should be a PowerPoint or video presentation that the student uploads to Quercus. If the student chooses to do a PowerPoint presentation, it must be done with voice-over (using PowerPoint's recording function or something like loom or Screen-cast-o-matic). The presentations are to be posted to Quercus **by Wednesday of the fifth week of Class (June 17).**

Students will be required to watch at least 3 other presentations and write a 400-500-word summary of what they learned from the presentations on Quercus by **Saturday at Midnight, June 19.**

5. Final Research Paper (30%): Students will write a 2500-3000-word research paper on an historical experience that shaped the Jewish People. Papers are **due by July 17.**

Assessment	Possible Points
Research Paper: On an Historical Experience That Shaped Jewish People (2500 – 3000 words).	30
Group Presentation: On a North American Jewish Community, Their Institutions, Culture, and Social Values	25
Required Course Textbook Review (800-1000 words).	10
Class Participation (discussion boards & participation in two synchronous discussions)	35
Total Possible Points	100

- 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

Late work (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. No late submissions will be accepted on the course discussion boards. 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

www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf, 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.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. 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* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871>). 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 http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>.

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. 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.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (May 18-22) Introduction to the Jews, Jewish history and belief.

Posted PowerPoint Lectures:

- Introduction to Jewish History Part 1: The destruction of the Temple, the Jewish diaspora, and the emergence of rabbinic Judaism. Introduction to the classic rabbinic texts; Introduction to Jewish thought and hermeneutics.
- Introduction to Jewish History Part 2: Medieval to Modern, key events that shaped Jewish belief, practice and culture. Twentieth century Jewish history, the Holocaust, the establishment of the State of Israel, Judaism in North American, the emergence of the Canadian-Jewish community, and the development of the modern branches of Judaism. Who is a Jew?
- Introduction to Contemporary Judaism in North America

Readings:

- David Ben-Gurion, "The Kingdom of the Spirit," *The Atlantic* (1961)
- Brenner, Michael. *A Short History of the Jews* (Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2010), Forward, Chapters 1, 3, 5
- David Novak, "Social Contract in Jewish Thought," 53-75.

Zoom Interview:

- This week will also include the Guest visit of a Jewish Rabbi. Students will submit their questions prior to a Zoom interview conducted between the Professor and the Rabbi. While the Zoom interview will be recorded for students to watch, students will be encouraged to join the interview live. If students attend the interview live, it can count as one of their two required synchronous discussions.

Week 2 (May 25-29): Jewish History and Distinctives Continued.

Posted PowerPoint Lectures:

- Second Temple Judaism: An Introduction to the history and practices of Second Temple Judaism. Relation and diverse responses to the Roman Empire.

- Classical Judaism: An examination of the rise and beliefs of Classical Judaism as well as contemporary beliefs, issues, and challenges for Classical Judaism today.
- Maimonides: Introduction to Moses Maimonides

Readings:

- Cohn-Sherbok D. *Judaism: History, Belief, and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2003), Chapters 13-18; 27-33.
- Brenner, Michael. *A Short History of the Jews* (Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2010), Chapter 7
- Shaye J.D. Cohen, "Judaism at the Time of Jesus," *Jews & Christians Speak of Jesus*, ed. Arthur E. Zannoni (Fortress Press), 3-12

Week 3 (June 1-5): Basic Beliefs: Introduction to Core beliefs and doctrines of Modern and Classical Judaism. Judaism as a way of life. Jewish approaches to Scripture, theology, practice, and ritual. The place for Messianic Judaism, Jewish Messianism and the spectrum of Canadian-Jewish social values.

Posted PowerPoint Lectures:

- Jewish Ethics: Jewish approach to Ethics, Unique Contributions to Ethics, Key Problems and Elements within Jewish Ethics
- Messianism in Judaism: Non-static development. Diversity of Opinions. Exploration of different approaches within Judaism.
- The Hidden Messiah in Judaism: The Hiddenness of God and the Hidden Messiah as a major focus in Jewish hope and expectation as a doctrine that has evolved with conflicting opinions.

Readings:

- Herman Wouk, *This is My God* (Boston: Little Brown and Co, 1987), Parts I-II.

Week 4 (June 8-12): Continued exploration of Jewish beliefs, communities and their distinctives. Articulating and interpreting Jewish worldview, perspectives and values.

Posted PowerPoint Lectures:

- Judaism as a Story: Truth as rooted in story and the importance of imagination. Focus on story over dogma. Story rather than creeds.
- Salvation in Judaism: Introduction to divergent perspectives within classical and modern Judaism.
- Who is a Jew?

Readings:

- Herman Wouk, *This is My God* (Boston: Little Brown and Co, 1987), Parts III-IV.

Week 5 (June 15-19): Student Research and Presentations Week

Students will prepare and upload a presentation to Quercus in which they will study and prepare a report on a specific Jewish community in North America and describe their practices, beliefs, and institutions. They will explain how this community interprets Judaism and ways they are distinct.

Week 6 (June 22-26): Implications for positive cross-cultural engagement: Understanding how Church history continues to shape Jewish-Christian dialogue. Understanding how the Canadian Jewish community as a marginalized minority in an historically Christian society shapes cross-cultural communication today. Understanding contemporary Jewish critical concerns. The future for Jewish-Christian dialogue.

Posted PowerPoint Lectures:

- Parting of the Ways: Judaism during the time of Christianity. A parting of the ways or ways that never parted?
- Intermarriage: Trends, statistics and approaches
- Chosenness: A reflection on how Judaism sees this topic.

Readings:

- Shaye JD Cohen, "The ways that Parted: Jews, Christians, and Jewish-Christians 100-150 CE, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (Harvard University, Preprint)
- Cohn-Sherbok D. *Judaism: History, Belief, and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2003), Chapters 19-20.
- Brenner, Michael. *A Short History of the Jews* (Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2010), Chapter 5.

Week 7 (June 29-July 3): Jewish Roots: Understanding the Jewish roots of the New Testament. Implications for approaching the Biblical text, doing Christian theology, and making use of Jewish thought.

Posted PowerPoint Lectures:

- Rabbinic Background of the NT: Jewish roots and Implications for Hermeneutics and Christian Theology.
- The History of the Jews of Canada
- Messianic Judaism – Overview

Readings:

- Jacob B Agnus, "Judaism and the New Testament," in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 13 (Fall 1976): 80-97.
- H.L. Ellison, "Jesus and the Pharisees," in *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute* 85 (1953), 35-47

Week 8 (July 6-10): Review, Extended Discussion, & Work Week for Book Review

Rather than engaging with new material this week, students will engage in an extended discussion of course themes—particularly cross-cultural engagement, the future of Christian-Jewish dialogue, missiological issues, and the implications of Jewish thought for Christian theology.

Students will have time to work on their book reviews and start on their final projects this week.

Select Bibliography

Cohen, Shaye. *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1987)

Cohn-Sherbok. *Messianic Judaism* (London: Cassell, 2000) A sympathetic study of contextualisation by a pluralist Reform Rabbi who sees MJ as a valid form of Judaism

De Lange, Nicholas. *An Introduction to Judaism*. 2 Ed. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Diamant, Anita. *Choosing a Jewish Life, Revised and Updated: A Handbook for People Converting to Judaism and for Their Family and Friends*. 1st Pbk. Ed edition. New York, NY: Schocken, 2007.

Diamant, Anita, and Howard Cooper. *Living a Jewish Life*. New York, NY: William Morrow Paperbacks, 2007.

Donin, Hayim Halevy. *To Be A Jew: A Guide To Jewish Observance In Contemporary Life*. 2nd Ed. New York, NY: Basic Books, 1991.

Falcon, Rabbi Ted. *Judaism For Dummies*. 2nd Ed. Hoboken, NJ: For Dummies, 2013.

Jocz Jacob. *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books. 1949

Johnson Paul. *A History of the Jews* (London: Weidenfield, 1987) A clear, informative and readable history of the Jewish people, which tries to be fair on the issues of Zionism and the Palestinians.

Jessup G. *No Strange God* (St Albans: Olive Press, 1987) A short, basic introduction to Jewish beliefs and practices, from a Christian perspective and with many references to the Judaism of Jesus and the New Testament.

Neusner, Jacob. *Judaism The Basics*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016.

Potok Chaim. *The Chosen* (UK: Penguin, 1992). A classic novel of two Jewish boys growing up in the Hasidic and Reform communities, and the dynamics of their friendship.

Robinson, George. *Essential Judaism: A Complete Guide to Beliefs, Customs & Rituals*. Reissue edition. New York, NY: Atria Books, 2016.

Steinberg, Milton. *As a Driven Leaf*. (Behrman House (March 1, 1996)

Telushkin, Joseph. *Jewish Literacy*. Revised edition. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2010.