Course Description:

This course explores the experiences of 20th and 21st century American, European, and Israeli Jews as portrayed in film through various themes that have shaped contemporary Jewish identity. By placing films in their cultural context, students will examine external perception, Jewish self-representation and self-understanding. Themes include assimilation, anti-Semitism, Holocaust, hybrid identity, family, humor, ethnicity, and collective memory.

SLOs:

1. Proficiencies and Experiences: Human Diversity
   With respect to issues related to race, ethnicity, gender, or societies in the developing world, students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the historical, cultural, social, or political conditions of identity formation and function in human society, including the ways in which these conditions influence individual or group status, treatment, or accomplishments.

   More specifically, with respect to issues related to race, ethnicity, and gender of American, European, and Israeli Jews of European and Arab descent, students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the historical, cultural, social, and political conditions of their various identity formations and functions in human society, including the ways in which these conditions influence their individual or group status, treatment, and accomplishments.

2. Proficiencies and Experiences: Oral Communication
   1. Students will be able to select and use appropriate forms of evidence in a public presentation.
   2. Students will be able to design verbal messages to suit particular audiences and purposes.
   3. Students will be able to use visual cues (such as presentation software, staging, props, costumes, makeup, and gesture) to enhance a public presentation.

   In particular, by serving as the class expert for a day and a final project of “pitching” a film, students will be able to select and use appropriate forms of evidence in a public presentation; design verbal messages to suit particular audiences and purposes; and be able to use visual cues (such as presentation software, staging, props, costumes, makeup, and gesture) to enhance a public presentation.
3. Pillars: Philosophical/Religious/Ethical Inquiry, level II

Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to critically reflect on or apply the theoretical methods of, one of the fields of philosophy, religious studies, or ethics via a focus on a specific area or set of issues.

More specifically, students will be able to demonstrate the ability to critically reflect on the field of religious studies through a focus on the issues of the historical, cultural, social, and political conditions of Jewish identity-constructions that incorporate various ethnic, socio-economic, and national dimensions.

4. Pillars: Creativity and Aesthetics, level II

1. Students will be able to analyze and construct clear and well-supported interpretations of creative works.
2. Students will be able to articulate and discuss the ways in which creative works reflect values and modes of thought (or ways of knowing) of individuals and cultures.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADE CALCULUS:

1. Attendance/Participation (30%): Based on attendance, contribution to class discussion, and “active listening.” Students are expected to have watched the assigned film and study the assigned reading(s) before each class.

   Active Listening: Listening to another person speak is not a passive enterprise. To truly understand another person requires paying attention to his or her words, taking notes on what the other person says, making associations with what you already know, asking questions when you don’t understand. This applies to your classmates in small or large group discussions as well as to professor.

2. Class Expert Oral Presentation (10%)—will assess Proficiencies and Experiences: Human Diversity SLO

   Each student will give a 20-minute presentation on one aspect of a particular day’s film. This will entail:
   - Reading additional background material
   - Presenting the additional background material to the class
   - Leading class discussion about the film and its relation to the reading, including judicious selection of film clips related to discussion questions and topics
   - Presenting one’s own ideas about how the film relates to issues of historical, cultural, social, and political conditions of the various identity formations and functions in human society of the characters in the film, including the ways in which these conditions influence the characters’ individual or group status, treatment, and accomplishments
See Grading Rubric “A” (appended at the end of the syllabus)

Students will be assessed on the following as well:

- selection of additional material
- degree to which additional material was incorporated into presentation
- posture and eye contact: presenter’s ability to connect with audience
- organization of presentation
- audibility and articulation
- ability to elicit and engage fellow students in active discussion
- ability to handle questions from fellow students
- whether discussion related to topics introduced in the course
- demonstration of creative and/or original thinking

3. Final project (60%) – consists of two parts — DUE Jan. 13

Part I (30%) Select an American, European, or Israeli film not discussed in the course and, impersonating the writer, “pitch it” as if you had written the film yourself to the class (as if the class were producers). You will have 15 minutes to pitch the film and the class will have 5 minutes to interrogate your pitch.

The professor will assess Proficiencies and Experiences: Oral Communication SLO for each student’s pitch using rubric “B” along with the following additional criteria:

- described film in organized fashion, indicating genre and breaking down plot by acts
- described film in compelling and interesting fashion; told personal story and/or related narrative to current events or common experience
- used time economically
- posture and eye contact: presenter’s ability to connect with audience
- high level of enthusiasm and passion
- audible and articulate
- handled interrogation expertly

Recommended Reading:

- THE ART OF A GOOD PITCH: By the Directors of Tribeca Film (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5ZI5aC1zvM)
- “How to give an effective presentation” at http://smucomm101t1.wikifoundry.com/page/How+to+give+an+effective+presentation
- “Training students to give effective presentation” at http://hawaii.edu/gened/oc/oc_3.html
Part II (30%). Option A: 3-page written analysis of the film whose central thesis relates to one of the theories of identity-construction and representation discussed in class in which you:
- state and defend that thesis with adequate attention to analysis and evidence
- demonstrate an understanding of essay and paragraph development and organization
- craft sentences with attention to audience, purpose, and tone, as well as sentence variety and diction
- demonstrate proper use of grammatically and mechanically correct English (or the language in which the course is taught)

In addition to assessing the Pillars: Philosophical/Religious/Ethical Inquiry, level II and Creativity and Aesthetics, level II SLOs using rubrics “C” and “D” appended at the end of the syllabus, written components of the final project will be evaluated on the following additional criteria:
- states thesis clearly in introduction
- thesis reflects creative and/or original thinking
- defends thesis with adequate and appropriate supporting evidence
- analysis of film relates directly to thesis
- develops coherent and linear argument
- demonstrates understanding of essay and paragraph development and organization
- crafts sentences with attention to audience, purpose, and tone, as well as sentence variety and diction
- paragraph transitions are smooth and purposeful
- demonstrates proper use of grammatically and mechanically correct English
- conclusion not only summarizes and brings the discussion to a close but expands reader’s thoughts on topic

Part II (30%). Option B: Produce a 5 minute movie trailer that highlights themes of identity and representation as they appear in the movie.

Topics and Assignments (readings are posted on BLACKBOARD unless otherwise indicated)

1. Monday, Jan. 4
   9:00-10:00   Jewish Film in Context: Representation, History, and Cultural Identity Constructions
   10:00-Noon  How to Watch a Film: Watch Gentleman’s Agreement (1947)
   ***LUNCH***
   1:00-2:25   The Relationship Between Film and Cultural Attitudes
   2:30-4:00   Polite Antisemitism: Gentleman’s Agreement (1947)

Homework for Tuesday: Watch Goodbye, Columbus (1969) and Fiddler on the Roof (1971)
2. Tuesday, Jan. 5

9:00-10:00 Assimilation and Class Conflict in Goodbye, Columbus
10:50-Noon Stereotypes of Self and Other in Goodbye, Columbus
***LUNCH***
1:00-2:00 Nostalgic Memories: Representing Eastern European Life in Fiddler on the Roof
2:30-4:00 Representing Jewish Customs and Culture in Fiddler on the Roof

Homework for Wednesday: Watch Annie Hall (1977) and Yentl (1983)

3. Wednesday, Jan. 6

9:00-10:00 History of Jewish Humor
10:05-10:25 Student presentation #4 on Joseph Boskin and Joseph Dorinson, “Ethnic Humor: Subversion and Survival,” American Quarterly (37.1), Special Issue: American Humor (Spring, 1985), pp. 81-97
10:30-10:50 Student presentation #5 on David Desser and Lester Friedman, “The Schlemiel as Modern Philosopher,” American-Jewish Filmmakers. Traditions and Trends (University of Illinois Press, 1993), pp. 34-103
10:55-Noon Woody Allen and Jewish Humor in Annie Hall
***LUNCH***
1:00-2:00 Voicing the Gender-Transgressive Female in Yentl
2:30-4:00 Representing Eastern European Life in Yentl

Homework for Thursday: Watch Avalon (1990) and Liberty Heights (1999) and select a final project film

4. Thursday, Jan. 7

9:00-10:15 Representing the Immigrant Experience in Avalon


***LUNCH***

1:00-2:25  The Levinson Trilogy or Quartet?: Film as Autobiography

2:30-4:00  Levinson’s Cinematography

**Homework** for Friday: Watch *Life is Beautiful* [La vita è bella] (Italy, 1997) and *Everything is Illuminated* (2005)

5.  Friday, Jan. 8

9:00-10:00  Holocaust and Humor: Incongruence and the Inconceivable


10:30-10:50  Student presentation #11 on Maurizio Viano, “‘Life Is Beautiful’: Reception, Allegory, and Holocaust Laughter,” *Jewish Social Studies* New Series 5.3 (Spring-Summer, 1999): 47-66

10:55-Noon  American vs. European Representations of the Holocaust

***LUNCH***

1:00-2:00  Second Generation Holocaust Experience and Memoirs


3:00-4:00  From Book to Film: What Makes An Effective Adaptation

**Homework** for Monday: Watch *Sallah Shabati* (Israel, 1964) and *The House on Shlush Street* [Ha-Bayit Berechov Sheloush] (Israel, 1973), and work on final projects

6.  Monday, Jan. 11

9:00-11:00  History of Israeli Film
7. Tuesday, Jan. 12

9:00-10:00 The Role of the Holocaust in Israel: The Shoah
***LUNCH***
1:00-2:00 Israeli Machismo and the Holocaust Legacy for Second Generation Jewish Israelis

8. Wednesday, Jan. 13

Student Film Pitches—20 minutes each

Part II of Final Projects Due by midnight Jan. 13
**Syllabus for Reel Judaism: Cinematic Representations of Jewish Life**

**Human Diversity: Combined Rubric “A”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Reel Judaism: Cinematic Representations of Jewish Life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Lander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Assignment Class Expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Exemplary: Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the historical, cultural, social, or political conditions of identity formation and function in human society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Accomplished: Demonstrates adequate understanding of the historical, cultural, social, or political conditions of identity formation and function in human society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Developing: Demonstrates partial understanding of the historical, cultural, social, or political conditions of identity formation and function in human society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Beginning: Demonstrates surface understanding of the historical, cultural, social, or political conditions of identity formation and function in human society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Absent: Demonstrates little or no understanding of the historical, cultural, social, or political conditions of identity formation and function in human society.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**

**SLO 1:** With respect to issues related to race, ethnicity, gender, or societies in the developing world, students will be able to discuss and analyze the ways in which these conditions influence individual or group status, treatment, or accomplishments.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accomplishment Level</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Several types of appropriate evidence are selected for a public presentation. Students use appropriate evidence to support a public presentation. The verbal message is developed to suit the intended audience and purpose. Visual cues make the public presentation interesting and supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplished</td>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>Several types of appropriate evidence are selected for a public presentation. Students use appropriate evidence to support a public presentation. The verbal message suits the intended audience and purpose. Visual cues are used to make the presentation understandable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>Most of the evidence selected for a public presentation is appropriate. Students have a developing ability to use appropriate evidence to support a public presentation. The verbal message is somewhat suited to the intended audience or purpose. Visual cues detract from the understandability of the presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning</td>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>Some of the evidence selected for a public presentation is appropriate. Students have an emerging ability to use appropriate evidence to support a public presentation. The verbal message is not suited to the intended audience or purpose. Visual cues are not used to make the presentation understandable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>&gt; 60</td>
<td>No evidence is selected for a public presentation. Students have not attempted to use appropriate evidence to support a public presentation. The verbal message is not suited to the intended audience or purpose. Visual cues are not used to make the presentation understandable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

- SLO 1: Students will be able to select and use appropriate forms of evidence in a public presentation.
- SLO 2: Students will be able to design verbal messages to suit particular audiences and purposes.
- SLO 3: Students will be able to use visual cues (such as presentation software, staging, props, costumes, makeup, and gesture) to enhance a public presentation.

Date: [ ]

Assignment: [ ]

Faculty: [ ]

Lander: [ ]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXEMPLARY</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Given a specific area of study or set of issues, the student successfully applies a variety of theoretical methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCOMPLISHED</td>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>Given a specific area of study or set of issues, the student provides a clear reflection on the appropriate theoretical methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEVELOPING</td>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>Given a specific area of study or set of issues, the student shows a developing ability to reflect on the appropriate theoretical methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEGINNING</td>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>Given a specific area of study or set of issues, the student shows a basic ability to reflect on the appropriate theoretical methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSENT</td>
<td>&gt; 60</td>
<td>Given a specific area of study or set of issues, the student shows an inability to successfully apply theoretical methods.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SLO: Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to critically reflect on or apply the theoretical methods of one of the fields of philosophy, religious studies, or ethics via a focus on a specific area or set of issues.

Philosophical & Religious Inquiry and Ethics II: Combined Rubric "C"
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accomplishment Level</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Student analysis reveals the creative work and supports the interpretations of creative works. Evidence organization is effective in revealing important patterns, differences, or similarities relating the role and value of creative works to the cultures (context) that create and adopt them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplished</td>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>Student analysis reveals the important patterns, differences, or similarities related to a creative work. Interpretations of creative works are clear and supported. Organizes evidence revealing important patterns, differences, or similarities relating the role and value of creative works to the cultures (context) that create and adopt them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>Student analysis reveals some important patterns, differences, or similarities related to a creative work. Interpretations of creative works are mostly clear and supported. Organization of evidence is not effective in revealing important patterns, differences, or similarities relating the role and value of creative works to the cultures (context) that create and adopt them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning</td>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>Student analysis is unrelated to the creative work and supports the interpretations of creative works. Evidence is listed, but it is not organized and/or is unrelated to the role and value of creative works to the cultures (context) that create and adopt them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>&gt; 69</td>
<td>Student provides no analysis of a creative work. Interpretations of creative works are not clear or supported. Evidence is not clear or unrelated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**

Syllabus for Reel Judaism: Cinematic Representations of Jewish Life

Creativity and Aesthetics Rubric

**Course:** Reel Judaism
**Faculty:** Lander
**Assignment:** Final Project

**Date:** 11/4/12

**Rev.:**