

Add Course Request

Submitted on: 2012-11-02 12:17:10

1. COURSE SUBJECT	HEB / JUDS
2. COURSE NUMBER (OR PROPOSED NUMBER)	3301
3. COURSE TITLE	The Jewish Middle Ages
4. INITIATING DEPARTMENT or UNIT	LCL
5. NAME OF SUBMITTER	Susan L Einbinder
6. PHONE of SUBMITTER	Phone: +1 860 486 9249
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8. CONTACT PERSON	Stuart Miller
9. UNIT NUMBER of CONTACT PERSON (U-BOX)	1057
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11. EMAIL of of contact person	Email: stuart.miller@uconn.edu
12. Departmental Approval Date	10/05/2012
13. School/College Approval Date	10/16/2012
14. Names and Dates of additional Department and School/College approvals	
15. Proposed Implementation Date	Term: spring, Year: 2013
16. Offered before next printed catalog is distributed?	Yes
17. General Education Content Area	Content Area 1 Arts and Humanities Content Area 4 Diversity and Multiculturalism
18. General Education Skill Code (W/Q). Any non-W section?	None No
19. Terms Offered	Semester: Fall Spring Year:
20. Sections	Sections Taught: one
21. Student Number	Students/Sections: 20
22. Clarification:	
23. Number of Credits	3 if VAR Min: Max: credits each term
24. INSTRUCTIONAL PATTERN three periods per week, mixed lecture and discussion	
25. Will this course be taught in a language other than English?	No If yes, then name the language:
26. Please list any prerequisites, recommended preparation or suggested preparation: None	
27. Is Instructor, Dept. Head or Unit Consent Required?	No

28. Permissions and Exclusions:	
29. Is this course repeatable for credit ?	No If yes, total credits allowed: Allow multiple enrollments in same term?
30. Grading Basis	Graded
31. If satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading is proposed, please provide rationale :	
32. Will the course or any sections of the course be taught as Honors? AsHonors	
33. Additional Details:	
34. Special Attributes:	
35. REGIONAL CAMPUS AVAILABILITY: The course will only be offered at the Storrs campus. There is no other course covering this material or faculty who cover it.	
36. PROVIDE THE PROPOSED TITLE AND COMPLETE CATALOG COPY:	
HEB/JUDS 3301, Jewish Middle Ages. Survey of literature produced by Jews in the medieval period, sacred and secular, from the major centers of European settlement and a wide variety of genres.	
37. RATIONALE FOR ACTION REQUESTED	
There is currently no course in Judaic Studies or Medieval Studies covering Jewish history or cultural production in Europe between 600-1800; this course fills some of that gap. In addition to providing a necessary component of a solid Judaic Studies curriculum, it also strengthens offerings for students interested in religious and/or ethnic minorities in medieval Europe, primarily Spain, France, Provence, Germany, England, and Italy. Students will be exposed to issues of minority/majority confrontation and adaptation; literary responses to new cultural trends and tensions; questions of tradition v. “modernity”; and historiographical problems that arise in the representation of both renaissance and persecution in the Jewish past. It is open to all students and therefore will hopefully increase awareness of some of the multicultural aspects and tensions of medieval societies, and create interest in other courses in Judaic Studies, Medieval Studies, Religion, History, Human Rights, and cognate literatures. The impact on other departments (as just listed) is not one of conflict or overlap, but should enhance the current array of offerings. There should be no effect on regional campuses, which do not offer a similar course.	
38. SYLLABUS:	
Online URL: (https://web2.uconn.edu/senateform/request/course_uploads/anp05007-1354118210-HEB JUDS 3301 expanded syllabus.docx)	
39. Course Information: ALL General Education courses, including W and Q courses, MUST answer this question	
39. A. This course surveys a broad expanse of the medieval Jewish experience both under Islamic and Christian rule, roughly spanning the period from 600 and the Arab conquest to 1500 and the final expulsions of Jewish communities from Christian Europe. It thus begins prior to the appearance of major Jewish settlement in Europe, offering a backdrop of Jewish life and writing in early medieval Palestine and Iraq, then follows the rise of Jewish communities and cultural production in Islamic Spain and Christian Europe. The readings are drawn from sacred and secular genres: poetry, chronicles, mystical, ethical and legal texts, folklore, rhymed prose romances and animal tales. Some comparison and contrast with corollary illustrations from Arabic or Romance writing is offered. Questions of minority/majority literature and social interaction are critical to the course, as are the ways these interactions have been represented in recent scholarship. One of the course goals is thus to enhance reflection on the difference (or similarity) between “then” and “now”; on the greater or lesser adaptability of minorities to outside cultural forces, or greater or lesser resistance to outside cultural trends; the	

creative ways in which communities respond to pressure, innovation and persecution; the diversity of medieval Jewish experience and by extension the medieval European experience.

B. The format of the course is a combination of lecture and discussion. Assigned readings are both from (translations of) primary texts and some secondary literature; the latter is often selected to present contrasting perspectives on a set of primary texts. Periodic short written assignments require students to demonstrate that they have read the required texts and comprehended the issues at stake; assignments also include a request to compare/contrast more than one text or opinion and therefore demand synthetic thought as well. A final take-home essay spans the semester's readings with a series of questions on the texts and themes covered.

C. Themes to be covered: the origins, movement and experience of Jewish communities in medieval Christian Europe and Islamic Spain; the relationship of Jewish minorities to Muslim or Christian majorities, historically and culturally viewed; the forms of writing that represent Jewish literary production over the medieval period and what constituencies they served; elite v. "popular" production; the diversity of Jewish responses to conditions of persecution or coexistence; intracultural and intercultural tensions; the limitations of literary records and the experience of those who did not write; historiographical trends in the representation of the Jewish past.

40. Goals of General Education: All Courses Proposed for a Gen Ed Content Area MUST answer this question

This course will expose students to the rich and varied experience of medieval Jewish communities in Europe, drawing on multiple sources and genres, many unfamiliar to English-language readers and some tantalizingly related to contemporary writing in host cultures. By raising questions of literary production and aesthetics as well as the relationship of minority to majority culture in times of harmony and times of sometimes brutal conflict, this course contributes to the overarching goals of the General Education program by emphasizing critical judgment, moral sensitivity, a greater awareness of oneself in a current setting by comparison to the past; consciousness of the diversity of human culture and experience; and the opportunity to enhance skills for analyzing and articulating responses to the materials in oral and written form.

41. Content Area and/or Competency Criteria: ALL General Education courses, including W and Q courses, MUST answer this question.: Specific Criteria

a. Arts and Humanities:

This course is appropriate for CA1 (Arts and Humanities) content because it explores "artistic, cultural and historical processes" in a context unfamiliar to most students but remarkable for its potential to generate awareness of different social configurations and possibilities and discussion of their immediate and longer-ranging consequences. The readings address the fluid boundaries between what is today often rigidly conceived as "secular and sacred" literature, "historical and fictional" literature, "high and low," "ours" and "theirs." What is "Jewish" and what is "non-Jewish" in a Hebrew sonnet or martyrological chronicle? What are the ways in which Jewish communities develop in Islamic and Christian settings and how do they respond to ecological, political, economic and social challenges? What is the role of literature in tracing the experience of these communities and how is the role of literature similar or different today? What do we mean by "identity," and who determines its limits? How do communities put pressure on individual deviance or expression and what kind of traffic or movement exists between communities of different faiths or backgrounds? How do we read literature that comes from a different cultural, geographical and chronological world, and what kinds of factors may bias our reconstruction of their meaning? When possible, this course may also enlist supplementary visual (art historical) or musical illustration.

b. Social Sciences:

c. Science and Technology:

i. Laboratory:

d. Diversity and Multiculturalism:

This course is also appropriate for CA4 (Diversity and Multiculturalism) content, because it is by definition the study of a distinct ethnic, religious minority in a majority culture. The course asks why in some cases (10th-12th c. Islamic Spain or the 14th c. papal states) Jewish minorities were able to thrive and coexist in Muslim or Christian settings, while in other cases a steady trend toward discrimination, segregation and ultimately expulsion forced a very different set of responses to the pressures of a host society. How did medieval societies understand what we today call “rights” or “tolerance,” even “identities”? This means not only examining Jewish communities embedded in different majority cultures, but the diversity of Jewish communities themselves: Ashkenazic, Sephardic, Provençal, North African, Iraqi, etc., as well as class and gender distinctions in individual communities. How did members of one confessional community relate to another and represent one another, and how do we today read their fantasies of conversion, vengeance or unification? What did it mean to move from one group to another? How did post-expulsion Jewish refugees surface in new communities and what kinds of factors permitted them to thrive or prevented them from doing so? What kinds of internal tensions characterized minority communities under stress? All of these questions, in addition to the sheer value of exposure to remarkable sampling of literature that is most likely new to these students, imply grappling with the core criteria of CA4 listings: the varieties of human experiences, perceptions, thoughts, values and modes of expression; the social constructedness of cultural production; the similarities that may surprisingly exist even across hostile confessional borders; issues of rights, migration and tolerance; and an awareness of the political and historical forces that shape all of the above.

43. International:

e. **Q course:**

f. **W course:**

42. RESOURCES:

Does the department/school/program currently have resources to offer the course as proposed
YES

If NO, please explain why and what resources are required to offer the course.

43. SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

ADMIN COMMENT:

Senate approved CA1 & CA4 12/10/12 // Det_syll_submitted_Now approved by GEOCCA1_112812AP.
GEOC4app.GEOC1app_contingent on rev_APto emailproposers_111512AP. newCA1CA4_110212AP.