



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Jewish Philosophy: Research Methods from the Israel Wisdom the Present Day - 14705

Last update 14-09-2023

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: Jewish Thought

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Reimund Leicht

Coordinator Email: rwleicht@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Tuesday 15-16

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Reimund Leicht

Course/Module description:

Since the very beginnings of the study of Jewish intellectual history in the Wissenschaft des Judentums, the study of Jewish philosophy assumed a prominent place. But what is the place of Jewish philosophy in the canon of disciplines of Jewish Studies? And how should we teach and study Jewish philosophy? Is it a basically historical or a philosophical or even theological discipline? What are the central research questions and the proper methods for the study of Jewish philosophy? And what makes the study of Jewish philosophy an “interesting” subject for the present-day student and scholar?

The present course will try to raise these and similar questions in order to formulate concepts and ideas for contemporary research on Jewish philosophy – a research that is aware of its intellectual foundations. It will do so by scrutinizing different approaches to the study of Jewish philosophy from the early 19th century to the present day. It will try to compare these approaches to other contemporary approaches in historical research and hermeneutics. It will try to assess the achievements and shortcomings of the study of Jewish philosophy during the past two centuries. Special attention will be paid to intellectual currents that became influential outside Jewish Studies.

As a course dealing with basic methodological questions of hermeneutics and historical research, the course will be of interest also for students interested in Jewish intellectual histories other than Jewish philosophical thought.

Course/Module aims:

Critical understanding of different methodological options in the historical study and hermeneutics of Jewish philosophy and evaluation of the applicability to new research today.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

Ability to formulate research approaches for the historical study and hermeneutics of Jewish philosophy (and Jewish intellectual history in general) with the purpose to apply them to future research.

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Reading and discussion in class, presentations

Course/Module Content:

Proposed topics for the sessions (open for change according to the request of students):

- 1. Introduction to the problem of research methods in the study of Jewish philosophy*
- 2. Basic concepts of hermeneutics*
- 3. Jewish philosophy in 19th century Wissenschaft des Judentums*
- 4. New approaches to Jewish philosophy at the turn of the 20th century (Cohen, Rosenzweig)*
- 5. Julius Guttmann's concept of a Philosophy of Judaism*
- 6. Leo Strauss' impact on the study of Jewish philosophy*
- 7. Philosophy and Kabbalah (Scholem, Idel and others)*
- 8. Shlomo Pines as a researcher and philosopher*
- 9. Approaches to Jewish philosophy in the generation after Pines (Harvey, Klein-Braslavy, Davidson, Stroumsa, Stern and others)*
- 10. Methods and research questions in the study of modern Jewish philosophy*

Required Reading:

Will be fixed at the beginning of the semester according to the topics that will be chosen

Additional Reading Material:

no

Grading Scheme:

*Essay / Project / Final Assignment / Home Exam / Referat 80 %
Presentation / Poster Presentation / Lecture/ Seminar / Pro-seminar / Research proposal 20 %*

Additional information: