

## *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

### *Syllabus*

## *Ethics and Jewish Education in the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas - 63013*

*Last update 02-05-2024*

*HU Credits:* 4

*Degree/Cycle:* 2nd degree (Master)

*Responsible Department:* Program in Jewish Education

*Academic year:* 0

*Semester:* 2nd Semester

*Teaching Languages:* English

*Campus:* Mt. Scopus

*Course/Module Coordinator:* Dr. Michael Gillis

*Coordinator Email:* [michael.gillis@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:michael.gillis@mail.huji.ac.il)

*Coordinator Office Hours:* Monday 15.00-16.00  
*Contact by email or skype*

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Teaching Staff:

Dr. Michael Gillis

Course/Module description:

Levinas is widely considered one of the major philosophers of the 20th Century. He was also a practicing Jewish educator and a public intellectual in the French Jewish community. The course will study Levinas's general philosophy, his understanding of Judaism and his thoughts on Jewish education and how these elements relate to one another. The course will also consider the continuing relevance of these ideas for Jewish education today.

Course/Module aims:

The course aims to develop a familiarity with Levinas's work and an understanding of it in the context of Jewish education. It aims to enable students to bring to bear Levinas's thought on their own educational thinking in a way which is both appreciative and critical.

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

Students will be able to read for understanding texts by Levinas.

Students will be able to investigate the central ideas in their philosophical and social context.

Students will be able to analyse and appraise Levinas's ideas and to apply them to contemporary issues in Jewish education.

Students will produce in groups creative educational presentations based on some themes in Levinas's Jewish and educational thought.

Attendance requirements(%):

85%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: The course will be taught online in English using a variety of media including recorded lectures, discussion forums, reading reports as well as group assignments.

Course/Module Content:

1. Levinas, the man and the philosopher
2. Levinas's Philosophy (1)
3. Levinas's Philosophy (2): the encounter with the other
4. Levinas as a Jewish Thinker

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5. Levinas as an Interpreter of the Talmud
  6. Greek and Hebrew
  7. Levinas and the philosophy of education
  8. Levinas as Pedagogue and Teacher
  9. The teacher-student relationship
  10. Levinas and the Holocaust
  11. Levinas on Jewish Education
  12. Levinas on Israel and Zionism
  13. Group project presentations

Required Reading:

Emmanuel Levinas, "Signature," in *Difficult Freedom*, Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1990, p.291.

Emmanuel Levinas, "Name of the Dog," in *Difficult Freedom*, pp. 151-153

Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity: conversations with Phillipe Nemo*, Duquesne University Press, Pittsburgh, 1985,

Chapter 4 "The Loneliness of Being"

Chapter 7: "The Face"

Chapter 8: "Responsibility for the Other"

Emmanuel Levinas, "A Religion for Adults" pp.11-23

Emmanuel Levinas, "How is Judaism Possible?" pp. 245-254

Both in *Difficult Freedom*

Emmanuel Levinas, "The Temptation of Temptation" in *Emmanuel Levinas, Nine Talmudic Readings*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1990, pp. 30-50

Emmanuel Levinas "The Translation of Scripture", *In the Time of the Nations*, Bloomington 1994, pp. 33-54

Chinnery, A. (2010). "Encountering the philosopher as teacher: The pedagogical postures of Emmanuel Levinas." *Teaching and Teacher Education* 26(8), 1704-1709

Extracts from Solomon Malka, *Emmanuel Levinas: His Life and Legacy*, Pittsburgh, 2006.

Annette Aronowicz, *Translator's Introduction, Nine Talmudic Readings.*, pp. xv-xxxii

Clarence W. Joldersma, "Pedagogy of the Other: a Levinasian approach to the Teacher-Student relationship," *Philosophy of Education*, 2001, 181-188

*Nine Talmudic Readings*, pp.155-159.

Israel Scheffler, "Philosophical Models of Teaching" in *Philosophy and Education* edited I. Scheffler Boston: Allyn and Bacon 1966 pp. 99-114.

"Yosl Rakover Talks to God

By Zvi Kolitz," [www.nytimes.com/books/first/k/kolitz-god.html](http://www.nytimes.com/books/first/k/kolitz-god.html)

Emmanuel Levinas, "Loving the Torah More than God," in *Difficult Freedom*, pp. 142-145.

Emmanuel Levinas, "Useless Suffering," trans. Richard A. Cohen, in R. Bernasconi and D. Woods, eds., *The Provocation of Levinas* (London: Routledge, 1988, pp. 161-2

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Emmanuel Levinas, "Reflections on Jewish Education,"

"Antihumanism and Education

both from *Difficult Freedom*, pp. 265-268, 277-290

Emmanuel Levinas, "The State of Caesar and the State of David," , in *Beyond the Verse*, London 1994, pp. 177-187.

"Politics After," in *Beyond the Verse*, London 1994, pp. 182-188.

Emmanuel Levinas, "Promised Land or Permitted Land," *Nine Talmudic Readings*, pp.51-69.

Additional Reading Material:

Simon Critchley, "Emmanuel Levinas: a disparate inventory," in *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas*, Simon Critchley and Robert Bernasconi (editors), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 202, pp. vv-xxviii

Hilary Putnam, *Levinas and Judaism* in *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas*, pp. 33-62.

*Research Perspectives on Jewish Education: Studies in Memory of Mordechai Bar-Lev*, Edited by Yisrael Rich and Michael Rosenak, Tel Aviv, 1999, pp. 65-100.

Grading Scheme:

Essay / Project / Final Assignment / Home Exam / Referat 50 %

Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports / Forum / Simulation / others 15 %

Attendance / Participation in Field Excursion 20 %

Other 15 %

Additional information:

Course Assessment

Participation in discussion forums 20%

Brief essay assignments 15%

Group projects 15%

Final Assignment 50%