In 1654 twenty-three impoverished Jewish refugees fleeing the Spanish Inquisition made their way from Brazil to New Amsterdam, later known as New York. Today, more than 350 years later, the American Jewish community, which they launched, may be the largest Jewish community in the world, and arguably, the most influential.

The five and half million men, women, and children of the contemporary American Jewish community—and demographers debate that number—constitute a "mixed multitude." They include Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews, Middle Eastern Jews, yordim (immigrants from Israel) Zionists, Orthodox Jews, Conservative Jews, Reform Jews, Reconstructionists, Havurahniks, feminist Jews, secularists, atheists, converts, bagels-and-lox Jews, and those who are "just Jewish." While they comprise less than three percent of the U.S. population, these Jews’ educational, social, and economic patterns give Jews, both as individuals and a community as a whole, heightened visibility.

Our goals in this class are the following:

1. To identify ways that Jews have contributed and responded to American cultural, political, economic, religious and social life.
2. To understand how Judaism has historically developed as a religion in an American context.
3. To acquire knowledge about the diversity of the Jewish people in America, and the different ways that American Jews have constructed their identities.
4. To understand the Jewish experience in America as part of broader trends in American history, including immigration, socio-economic mobility, acculturation and assimilation.
**Required texts:** All texts are available for purchase in the University bookstore, and are also on two-hour reserve at Morris Library. All additional readings will be posted on Sakai.

In the syllabus, this book is identified as AJE.

In the syllabus, sources from this book are identified as “Documents.”

**Student Responsibilities:**

**Midterm (25%)**
The midterm on Tue., Oct. 13 will consist of identification questions, analysis of primary source documents, and short essay responses. Materials will cover the period from 1654 up to the First World War.

**Research Paper (35%)**
Due Tue., Dec 1. You may choose any topic in American Jewish History which is of interest to you. Write a six to seven-page paper using at least five primary sources and two secondary sources. Primary sources include documents in *The Jew in the American World* and other document collections, as well as newspapers, and materials in the UD Special Collections. A maximum of three documents from the Marcus book may be used. A one-page proposal that lists your topic and selected sources will be due Thur. Nov. 5. We will discuss the paper in greater detail over the course of the semester. We will also visit Morris Library together as a class on Thur., Oct. 15, for a research orientation.

**Final Exam (25%)**
The final exam will be structured similarly to the midterm exam, and will cover the period from the First World War to the present day.

**Participation and attendance (15%)**
Class time will include a lecture, as well as seminar-style discussions about primary source documents. You should complete the assigned readings prior to our meetings. When primary source documents are assigned, bring your book to class. Please arrive to class on time and silence all phones and devices. All forms of social media are strictly prohibited while in class. More than two unexcused absences for the semester will result in a reduced participation grade. If you cannot attend class because of illness, religious observance, or a personal emergency, have it documented and let me know as early as possible. If you miss a class, please seek the details of the lecture from your fellow students, or see me during office hours.

**Academic Integrity:** All students are expected to uphold standards of academic integrity. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication. For reference on what constitutes academic integrity, please consult the UD Reference Guide to Academic Integrity at http://www.udel.edu/studentconduct/ai.html.
SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND LECTURES:

1. Introduction: Major Themes and Overview

9/1  In-class introduction

9/3  Jonathan D. Sarna, "Introduction," in AJE, xiii-xix


Jonathan D. Sarna, “Critical Dates in the History of American Judaism,” and “Glossary” (on Sakai). You don’t need to memorize these events or terms. Rather, use them as a reference throughout the semester.

2. The Colonial and Revolutionary Eras, 1654-1820, part 1

9/8  Jacob R. Marcus, "The American Colonial Jew…” in AJE, pp. 6-17

Documents, pp. 29-33, 42-43, 47-48, 55-56, 63

9/10 Jonathan D. Sarna, "The Impact of the American Revolution” in AJE, pp. 20-28

Arthur Hertzberg, “James Madison’s America,” pp. 74-89 (on Sakai)

Documents, pp. 95-98, 101-02, 105-09

3. The Colonial and Revolutionary Eras, 1654-1820, part 2

9/15  Rosh Hashanah—NO CLASS

9/17  Lois Dubin, “Port Jews in the Atlantic World” (on Sakai)

Guest lecture, Toni Pitock, 18th Century Jewish Merchant Families in Philadelphia

4. Migration of German Jews from Central Europe/ The Civil War

9/22  Stefan Rohrbacher, "From Württemberg to America…” in AJE, pp. 44-58


Documents, pp. 219-227


Documents, pp. 196-202
5. Reforming Judaism/ The Great Migration: East European Jews in America after 1880

9/29  Michael Meyer, “America,” in AJE, pp. 60-83
      Documents, pp. 238-248

10/1  Deborah Dwork, "Immigrant Jews on the Lower East Side" in AJE, pp. 120-137
      Moses Rischin, “Germans versus Russians” in AJE, pp. 138-150
      Documents pp. 321-325, 346-347, 367-368

6. Becoming Americans: Immigrant Life and Communal Politics

10/6  Andrew Heinze, "Adapting to Abundance,” in AJE, pp. 166-184
      Documents, pp. 355-356, 361-362, 375-380

10/8  Lucy Dawidowicz, "The Jewishness of the Jewish Labor Movement,” in AJE, pp. 185-93
      Tony Michels, A Fire in Their Hearts: Yiddish Socialists in New York, p. 1-25 (on Sakai)

7. Midterm and Library Research Orientation

10/13 Midterm in class

10/15 Library Research Orientation: meet in Morris Library, Room 200B

8. From World War I to World War II: American Antisemitism, American Zionism


10/22 Melvin Urofsky, "Zionism," in AJE, pp. 245-57
      Documents, pp. 381-392
9. From World War I to World War II: Jewish Spaces: Synagogues, Homes, City College

10/27 Jeffrey Gurock, "The Emergence of the American Synagogue," in AJE, pp. 219-35
Jenna Weissman Joselit, “The Jewish Home Beautiful,” in AJE, pp. 236-44

10/29 Irving Howe, Margin of Hope: An Intellectual Autobiography, pp. 1-31, 61-69 (on Sakai)

10. American Jewry, World War II and the Holocaust

11/3 Deborah Dash Moore, GI Jews, preface and pp. 49-85 (on Sakai)
Film in class: “From Philadelphia to the Front” (2005)

11/5 Henry Feingold, "Who Shall Bear Guilt for the Holocaust?" in AJE, pp. 274-93

RESEARCH PAPER TOPICS AND SOURCES DUE

11. Postwar Social Trends and Culture

Deborah Dash Moore, "Jewish Migration in Postwar America," in AJE, pp. 314-29

11/12 Jeffrey Shandler, “Gertrude Goldberg,” online at the Jewish Women’s Archive
Film in Class: “Yoo Hoo Mrs. Goldberg” (2010)

12. The Turbulent 1960s

Documents, pp. 498-500, 582-585, 595-599

11/19 Sue Fishkoff, The Rebbe’s Army: Inside the World of Chabad-Lubavitch, 1-32 (on Sakai)
Documents, pp. 437-446

November 23-27: Thanksgiving Break
13. Jewish Women in America / Contemporary Community Life and Politics

12/1 RESEARCH PAPERS DUE


Ayala Fader, Mitzvah Girls: Bringing Up the Next Generation of Hasidic Jews in Brooklyn, pp. 1–30 (on Sakai)

12/3 Jonathan Woocher, Sacred Survival: The Civil Religion of American Jews, pp. 11-21, 63-103 (on Sakai)

Guest lecture: Seth Katzen, CEO of the Delaware Jewish Federation

12/6 SUNDAY: Class trip to Philadelphia: Tour of Mikveh Israel Synagogue, and the National Museum of American Jewish History

14. The Future of American Jewry?

12/8 Sylvia Barack Fishman, Double or Nothing? Jewish Families and Mixed Marriage, pp. 1-13, 48-76 (on Sakai)

12/10 Calvin Goldscheider, Studying the Jewish Future, pp. 13-45 (on Sakai)

FINAL EXAM DATE TBD