Course Description: This course examines the social, religious, intellectual, and political experience of the Jewish people from the crystallization of their national-religious consciousness in the biblical period through the end of the 15th century. The religion and culture of the Jews are discussed within the broader context of their environment. The course divides neatly into three main periods: the biblical (or ancient) period, the post-biblical period (known as late antiquity), and the medieval period. We begin the course with the ancient Israelites as an independent people in its own land, and then move to the study of the Jews under foreign rule (including Babylonia, Persia, Greece, Rome, Islam, and Christianity). Primary sources (Bible, Dead Sea Scrolls, Josephus, Talmud, Maimonides, medieval chronicles, etc.) are emphasized throughout. The course concludes with the Expulsion of the Jews from the Iberian Peninsula.

Course Requirements: Students are expected to read all assigned material, including the Efron and Seltzer textbooks, along with the additional readings (both monographs and articles), many of which are on the Sakai website. The Course Packet (which contains maps, charts, timelines, and, most importantly, the primary sources) must be brought to class every day.

Textbooks:
ISBN: 9780131786875

Robert Seltzer, Jewish People, Jewish Thought (Prentice Hall)
ISBN: 0024089400
Written assessments:
- Two take-home exams (essay format), at dates to be determined
- A semester-length research paper, on a topic to be decided between professor and student, due at the end of the semester

Grading:
- Exam One – 25%
- Exam Two – 25%
- Research Paper – 50%

Bible:
In the early parts of the course, you will need to consult an English translation of the Bible (Jewish canon only). Recommended volumes include Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures (Jewish Publication Society), The Jerusalem Bible (Koren), and The New Revised Standard Version (published in several different versions, including such titles as The New Oxford Annotated NRSV Bible and The Harper Collins Study Bible).

You also can access various Bible translations online, though the aforecited versions are not available. The best site is probably http://www.biblegateway.com, and the best translation available there is the New International Version = NIV (the first on the list of English translations).

Academic Integrity:
Our statement is as plain as can be: “Cheating of any kind – including plagiarism on the research paper, copying on the exams – will not be tolerated. Pure and simple.”

Style Guide:
Students are welcome to use any of the standard style guides (Chicago, MLA, social science method, etc.), as long as the style is followed consistently throughout.
Course Objectives, Learning Goals, and Assessments:

By course end, the student will possess both:
   a) a firm grasp on the large narrative of Jewish history from its ancient origins until the dawn of modernity, and
   b) a detailed knowledge of one particular aspect of this history (along with its historiography) derived from the final research project.

The learning goals (using the SAS list) that best define this course are:
   (h) understand the bases and development of human and societal endeavors across time and place; and
   (i) explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in social and historical analysis.

Learning outcomes will be assessed via essay questions on the exams and via the major research paper required of students in this course. The latter project will be judged not only for its content, but by the student’s ability to write clearly and to express his/her ideas in a lucid fashion, along with the use of a wide array of both primary and secondary sources (essential to any history course).
Note: In addition to the materials listed here, all readings required for 01:563:201 Jewish Society and Culture I (the undergraduate survey course) should be read as well (available at Sakai) – though some of these items are listed below as well.

**Week 1: Ancient Israel**
- Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 7-43
- Online Course, “Bible and History” available at [http://jewishstudies.rutgers.edu/component/content/165?task=view](http://jewishstudies.rutgers.edu/component/content/165?task=view)

**Week 2: Israelite Religion**
- Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 47-111
- Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 4-5
Week 3: The Bible
- Efron, *The Jews*, pp. 30-48
- Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 43-46
- 2 Kings 22
- Gary Rendsburg, “JEDP Theory” (Sakai)

Week 4: Persian Period
- Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 112-164
- Nehemiah 9-12

Week 5: Hellenism and Judaism
- Efron, *The Jews*, pp. 49-62
- Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 171-194

Week 6: The Dead Sea Scrolls
- 1QS, Community Rule (Sakai)
- 1QpHab, Pesher Habakkuk (Sakai)
- 4QMMT, Halakhic Letter (Sakai)
Week 7: The Hellenistic Jewish Diaspora
- Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 195-242
- Philo, “On the Life of Moses,” sections 1-31 (Sakai)

Week 8: The End of the Second Temple Period
- Efron, *The Jews*, pp. 70-91
- Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 243-260
- Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, Book 15 (Sakai)

Week 9: The Early Rabbis (Tannaim)
- Efron, *The Jews*, pp. 92-115
- Mishna selections (Berakhot, Shabbat, Pesahim, Avot) (Sakai)

Week 10: The Talmud
- Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 261-314
- Bavli Bava Metzia 58b-59a (Sakai)
Week 11: The Jews under Islam (I)
- Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 323-349
- Online course on “Jews under Islam”:
  [http://jewishstudies.rutgers.edu/online-studies/jews-under-islam](http://jewishstudies.rutgers.edu/online-studies/jews-under-islam)

Week 12: The Jews Under Islam (II)
- Efron, *The Jews*, pp. 136-146

Week 13: Medieval Jewish Thought
- Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 373-450
- Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed*, 3.32 (Sakai)
- Maimonides, “Letter to Samuel ibn Tibbon” (Sakai)
Week 14: Jews under Christendom
- Efron, *The Jews*, pp. 147-183
- Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 350-372

Week 15: Jewish Mysticism and Kabbalah
- Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, pp. 419-453
- Zohar II, 20a-b (Noah) (Sakai)