

NEWS RELEASE

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NEW MASTER'S PROGRAM AND CHAIR MARKS NEXT ERA FOR RUTGERS' JEWISH STUDIES DEPARTMENT

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. – The Department of Jewish Studies in the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) at Rutgers-New Brunswick is already in a class of its own as the only program in New Jersey that confers a bachelor's degree in this area of academic study. Continuing the vision for the department, a master's degree-granting program has recently been added to the roster.

“The creation of the master's program is a natural progression from the success we've experienced on the undergraduate level,” said Nancy Sinkoff, the recently appointed chair of the department. “Last year approximately 2,000 students were enrolled in the courses offered by the Jewish Studies undergraduate program.”

Sinkoff, who is an associate professor of Jewish Studies and History, has been with the department since 1998. She will teach courses in the master's program such as “Europe and Its Jews: Problems and Directed Readings in Modern Jewish Historiography” as well as “Jewish History II: The Early Modern and Modern Experience.”

The M.A. in Jewish Studies offers an interdisciplinary approach to the study of all aspects of the Jewish experience from ancient times to present. The program draws on the strength of the department's faculty in areas such as Jewish history, Bible, Jewish literature and cultural studies, religious studies, Yiddish, and Israel studies, Sinkoff says.

The new master's degree program was established, in part, through an award from the School of Arts and Sciences Entrepreneurial Program. The department will receive funding and administrative support for two years to help launch the program.

According to Sinkoff, there is a demand for the new master's program. "The Jewish studies department has received many inquiries about a master's program over the years," she said.

Current students and Jewish Studies alumni aren't the only ones tapped to launch the master's program.

"There are two main populations that we expect will respond to our program – recent graduates who plan on pursuing a doctorate and professionals, including educators, social workers, and communal workers." Sinkoff said.

Students may pursue the M.A. part time. Also, the department offers a certificate in Jewish Studies to students enrolled in master's-level and doctoral-level programs at Rutgers University. These include degree candidates in professional programs such as library and information science education, and social work along with those seeking a master's and doctorate degrees in the humanities and social sciences programs.

In addition to the master's program in Jewish Studies, SAS also is rolling out a new master's degree in global history. Both new degree options are a part of the school's focus on promoting innovation.

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