



Division of Academic Jewish Studies

Academic Bulletin AY 2024-2025

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Albert A. List College

Dean: Dr. Amy Kalmanofsky

Associate Deans: Orlea Marlin, Rebecca Perten

Albert A. List College (List College) grants the degree of Bachelor of Arts and offers a full spectrum of courses in Bible, Hebrew language, Jewish history, Jewish literature, Jewish thought, Rabbinic literatures and cultures, Jewish gender and women's studies, Jewish ethics, and more.

Through the Joint Program with [Columbia University's School of General Studies](#) and the [Double Degree Program with Barnard College](#), students also receive a superior liberal arts education. While some graduates of the program choose to go on to careers in the Jewish community, most students pursue a wide variety of professions.

Academic Vision

List College produces literate, skilled, critically sophisticated, and committed Jews through an intense academic program that provides a foundation in classic Jewish texts and ideas, that introduces students to traditional and critical modes of interpretation, and that provides them with a historical and religious context through which to understand, appreciate and relate to the texts, ideas, traditions, and events that are central and remain vital to Jewish life and living.

List classes invite academic and religious inquiry and create an environment in which students can question, explore, and critique Jewish texts and tradition, while acquiring the skills to decipher them, and while developing a personal and/or religious relationship to them. List classes consider the opportunities and challenges of contemporary Jewish life and how Jewish texts and tradition can address them.

List College Learning Goals

Students should graduate from List College with an understanding of central Jewish texts, ideas, and events, with an appreciation of the depth, beauty, and relevance of Jewish texts and traditions to Jewish life and in relation to other cultural-historical contexts, and with the skills and desire to commit to a life of Jewish living and learning.

List College Student Learning Outcomes

By graduation, List College students will be able to...

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the contents, meaning, and significance of the Jewish canon
2. Demonstrate a foundational understanding of how Jewish civilization and humanities inform and are informed by broader historical and cultural contexts
3. Read, write, speak, and translate Hebrew at or above the advanced intermediate level (Hebrew 5203/Bet II), enabling direct engagement with Jewish texts
4. Analyze Jewish texts using methods appropriate to their field of study, including through theological, historical, exegetical, or other critical lenses
5. Distinguish the main components of the academic study of religious texts as distinct from, yet related to, the study or practice of those texts in other contexts or for other purposes

Course of Study

List College courses emphasize Jewish studies, content acquisition, and skill development in the areas of oral and written communication, as well as critical analysis and reasoning. The knowledge acquired and skills developed through JTS classes complement what students learn in their liberal arts curricula at Barnard and/or Columbia.

The course of study leading to the BA consists of a minimum of 82 credits, 54 of which must be completed in residence at List College, and a minimum of 60 credits in liberal arts at another accredited college or university. Of the 82 List College credits, 37 are core requirements, 30 make up the major (with 6 credits “double counting” from the core requirements), and 21 are electives.

Of the 60 required liberal arts credits, 18 must be distributed as follows: 6 in English; 6 in history, philosophy, or the social sciences; and 6 in mathematics or laboratory sciences. The remaining 42 credits may be taken as electives. Only grades of C- or better in liberal arts classes will be applied toward graduation requirements. Courses taken Pass/Fail will not count unless they were taken as Pass/D/Fail—thus ensuring that the requisite grade of C- was earned. The Joint Program, a cooperative arrangement with Columbia University, and the Double Degree Program, a cooperative arrangement with Barnard College, are two ways of fulfilling this requirement. In addition, students at Columbia or Barnard may apply up to 15 credits from Columbia or Barnard (in excess of the 60 required) toward the credits required by List College.

Core Curriculum

In consonance with List College’s commitment to providing its students with the strongest grounding in Jewish Studies, the curriculum mandates a 37-credit core. The courses offer a solid foundation in Jewish history, literature, and thought, Bible, Rabbinic literatures and cultures, and in the Hebrew language. Several core courses require facility with Hebrew texts. All students will take courses that cover textual analysis, Jewish ethics, critical methodologies, and the modern/contemporary Jewish

experience. In addition, all first-year students are required to take the two-part Foundations of the Jewish Canon and Thought, as well as a 1-credit extended-orientation course, List 101, intended to ease the transition from high school to college.

The core includes courses at both the introductory and advanced level. Students may apply transfer credit to the List College core. However, one course from each area must be completed at List College.

The 37-credit core is distributed as follows with students expected to fulfill the 1000-level requirement with a survey course and the 3000-level or higher course with a more specialized class. Students should consult their advisor about which courses can be used to fulfill specific core and breadth requirements.

Core Courses:

List 101: 1 credit

All first-year students register for this 1-credit course designed to ease the transition to college life in general and to List College specifically. Significant academic, social, and religious issues are addressed and discussed in an informal setting over lunch. List 101 is recommended but not required for students who transfer from other universities.

Foundations of the Jewish Canon I and II: 6 credits

This two-part course sequence is designed to provide students with a strong foundation in Jewish texts and thought from which they can draw as they progress through the List curriculum. This year-long course exposes students to the central and formative books and ideas that have shaped Judaism. The course introduces students to canonical texts and helps students understand the interplay between text and history and the complexities of the formation of the Jewish canon.

- **Part I** (3 credits), which covers the Bible through the early Middle Ages, must be taken during the fall semester of one's first year.
- **Part II** (3 credits), which covers the Middle Ages through contemporary culture, may be taken in the spring of either one's first or second year

Bible: 6 credits

- One 1000-level (or higher) Bible course (3 credits)
- One 3000-level (or higher) Bible course (3 credits)

Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures: 6 credits

- One 1000-level (or higher) Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures course (3 credits)
- One 3000-level (or higher) Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures course (3 credits)

Jewish Liberal Arts: 15 credits*

- One 1000-level (or higher) Jewish Thought course (3 credits)
- One 1000-level (or higher) Jewish Literature course (3 credits)
- One 1000-level (or higher) Jewish History course (3 credits)
- One 3000-level (or higher) course in either Jewish Thought, Jewish Literature, or Jewish History (3 credits)
- One 3000-level (or higher) course in either Jewish Thought, Jewish Literature, or Jewish History (3 credits)

*Note: Students can take up to two Jewish liberal arts classes in the same subject area.

HEB 5203: Hebrew Language (3 credits)

All students are required to take a Hebrew placement exam upon entry into the program. A student who does not place into HEB 5203 will be required to take the appropriate prerequisite Hebrew courses, which will count toward elective requirements. Progress toward fulfilling this requirement must be made each semester until HEB 5203 is completed. A student who exempts from HEB 5203 must complete 3 credits of an upper-level Hebrew language class or a literature course that is taught in Hebrew. HEB 5203 or the upper-level course used to fulfill this requirement must be taken at JTS.

Breadth Requirements

Of the courses taken for the core, major, and electives above, at least four must be distributed as follows:

- One modern period/contemporary
- One text-intensive
- One ethics
- One that engages critical methodologies

Courses used to fulfill breadth requirements must be taken in residence at JTS. Each breadth requirement is fulfilled by a single course. Fulfillment of the breadth requirements should not necessitate additional coursework beyond core, elective, and major requirements.

Sample Undergraduate First-Year Program

Fall Semester—16 Credits

- (3 credits) Foundations of the Jewish Canon and Thought I
- (1 credit) List 101
- (6 credits) Elementary Hebrew II
- (3 credits) First-Year Writing at Columbia/Barnard
- (3 credits) Social Science at Columbia/Barnard

Spring Semester—18 Credits

- (3 credits) Foundations of the Jewish Canon and Thought II
- (3 credits) Intermediate Hebrew I
- (3 credits) Introduction to Rabbinic Literature
- (3 credits) Literature at Columbia/Barnard
- (3 credits) Science at Columbia/Barnard
- (3 credits) Humanities at Columbia/Barnard



The Gershon Kekst Graduate School

Dean: Dr. Amy Kalmanofsky

Associate Deans: Orlea Marlin, Rebecca Perten

The Gershon Kekst Graduate School (Kekst) educates scholars and professional leaders for academia, the Jewish community, and beyond. Kekst is the scholarly heart of JTS. It is unique in the experience it offers students: a Jewish Studies faculty and library of unparalleled breadth and depth; rigorous study of Jewish texts in original languages and cultural contexts; engagement with scholarship that matters for the Jewish future, in a community enlivened by rabbinical, cantorial, education, and undergraduate schools; and the boundless professional and cultural opportunities of Manhattan.

The Kekst Graduate School offers the most extensive academic program in advanced Jewish studies in North America. It awards master's and doctoral degrees in numerous areas of specialization, ranging from Rabbinic literatures and cultures to modern Jewish studies and from Jewish gender and women's studies to Jewish ethics. Students delve deeply into their chosen areas of focus while acquiring broad-based knowledge of the Jewish experience.

Students at the Kekst School study as part of a diverse and committed community of scholars. Professional development is a significant part of their experience, with students given the opportunity to present their research and develop skills while being mentored by faculty during their student days and beyond. Alumni of the Graduate School serve successfully as professors, educators, organizational leaders, professionals, lay leaders, and more.

Kekst Academic Vision

The Kekst Graduate School at JTS educates scholars and professional leaders for academia, service in the Jewish community, and beyond. Kekst is unique in the experience it offers students: a Jewish Studies faculty and library of unparalleled breadth and depth; rigorous study of Jewish texts in original languages and considered within their cultural contexts; engagement with scholarship that addresses the fullest scope of Jewish life; training in professional skills; in a community enlivened by rabbinical, cantorial, education, and undergraduate schools; and the boundless professional and academic resources of Manhattan.

Kekst Learning Goals

In their course of study, Kekst students acquire a strong foundation in Jewish Studies from which they can draw as they gain expertise in their areas of interest. Students should graduate from Kekst with the ability to engage critically with the texts and artifacts of Jewish tradition in their original language and historical contexts. Through nurturing their academic acuity within a vibrant and committed community of scholars, Kekst students are prepared to assume influential roles within academia, the Jewish community and beyond.

Kekst Student Learning Outcomes

By graduation, Kekst students will be able to...

1. Demonstrate level-appropriate subject knowledge in their chosen academic discipline
2. Read, write, speak, and translate Hebrew at or above the advanced intermediate level (Hebrew 5203/Bet II), enabling direct engagement with Jewish texts and at the doctoral level, make use of advanced Hebrew and necessary research languages for primary text study
3. Exhibit a familiarity with Jewish texts, history and culture and the academic methods used in Jewish studies.
4. Demonstrate skills in scholarly research and analysis at the appropriate degree level
5. For the Ph.D., develop scholarly arguments that marshal appropriate primary and secondary sources to generate an original contribution to the field of specialization.

Graduate Advising

Each graduate student is assigned a faculty advisor upon admission who guides their course of study and track their progress through graduation. All graduate students also meet with the deans during their first semester of enrollment and in subsequent semesters as needed to ensure timely progress through their program.

Master's Programs: Course of Study

The MA program of Kekst Graduate School is designed to provide advanced academic training in areas including but not limited to Hebrew Bible and its interpretation, Rabbinic literatures and cultures, medieval and early modern Jewish studies, modern Jewish studies, Jewish ethics, Jewish gender and women's studies, and broad-based Jewish Studies. It also conducts a dual-degree program for students pursuing careers in Jewish professional leadership with the Columbia University School of Social Work. Dual degree programs with the Columbia School of Social Work and Mailman School of Public Health offer skills-based training in conjunction with Jewish academic study for students pursuing careers in Jewish professional leadership.

Most Kekst MA degrees consist of 30 credits taken over two years of full-time enrollment.

Foundational/Prerequisite Courses

In addition to any specific program requirements, students must complete the following prerequisite courses, demonstrate that the same materials were taken for credit previously, or show proficiency by examination:

BIB 5011: Introduction to Hebrew Bible

An introduction to the contents, structure, and themes of the Hebrew Bible. Integrated with that content, the course will also introduce students to a variety of methods in the study of Bible, both traditional and modern.

TAL 5025: Introduction to Text Study

An introduction to the major works of the classical rabbinic canon produced by the Rabbis in late antiquity. The Mishnah, Tosefta, halakhic midrashim, aggadic midrashim, and Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds will be considered in light of the historical and theological setting in which each work was produced, its literary characteristics, and its relationship to the other works of the classical rabbinic canon. Students should take this course after completing both BIB 5011 and demonstrating Hebrew proficiency at the level of HEB 2201.

HEB 5203: Intermediate Hebrew II

All entering students must take the Hebrew placement examination online. Should a student not yet have the required Hebrew proficiency, they must take Hebrew every semester until this proficiency is achieved, beginning with their first semester of enrollment. Hebrew courses completed to meet this requirement do not count towards the degree, but students may take classes towards the degree while they also work to meet the Hebrew requirement.

To receive the MA degree, students must demonstrate proficiency in Hebrew equivalent to the level of HEB 5203 (Intermediate Hebrew II).

Note: For students pursuing the MA in Jewish studies, prerequisite courses may count toward degree requirements. Students in specialized MA programs may fold one or more of the prerequisite courses into their degree requirements where applicable, subject to approval from the dean and the advisor. Students should consult with their advisor for more information. Hebrew courses are not counted toward degree credits.

Core Course: The First Year Seminar

All incoming Kekst students are required to take a 3-credit seminar during their first semester of graduate study, MDS 5102: Classics of the Jewish Tradition. The seminar provides a foundation in the academic skills needed for graduate study, highlights critical methodologies, and introduces the interdisciplinary nature of advanced Jewish studies.

Course Work

Most MA programs require completion of at least 30 graduate-level credits, with MDS 5102 accounting for 3 of those credits. The non-specialized MA in Jewish Studies requires 33 credits. A minimum of 18 credits must be taken at the New York City campus of JTS. All courses must have the approval of the program advisor.

Comprehensive Examinations

In most programs, upon completion of all coursework, a student must prove competence in their chosen field by passing a comprehensive examination. The date of the examination is determined in consultation with the student's academic advisor.

The comprehensive examination will be graded on the following scale: pass with distinction, pass, or fail. A student who fails the comprehensive examination may take it once more. A second failure automatically terminates the student's participation in the MA program.

Certain programs may require a capstone project or thesis in lieu of or in addition to a comprehensive examination. Requirements for each program are listed in their degree area and can be confirmed through consultation with the advisor.

MA Theses

Some MA programs require or allow students to elect to complete an MA thesis as part of their degree program. Students who wish to pursue advanced academic study beyond the MA, such as a PhD program, should strongly consider writing an MA thesis.

In programs where the thesis is an option, students generally choose between writing a thesis or taking comprehensive examinations. This decision is made in close consultation with the deans and academic advisor.

Joint MA/Ordination

Students enrolled in the Rabbinical School of the Jewish Theological Seminary who wish to study simultaneously for a master's degree in the Kekst Graduate School must apply to the graduate school for admission to the joint master's/ordination program. Students currently enrolled in the Rabbinical School are encouraged to apply no later than the fall semester of their third year in the program and, if accepted, begin the MA program in the graduate school the following semester. The graduate school will follow its regular admissions procedures.

Upon the approval of the student's graduate school advisor, the course requirements for the MA can be met in part by courses taken in the Rabbinical School in the student's field of concentration. At least 18 credits of course work must be applied exclusively to the MA degree and not toward Rabbinical School requirements. All requirements for the master's degree (course work, applicable foreign languages, and examinations) remain in effect.

PhD Programs: Course of Study

The program leading to the PhD at Kekst Graduate School provides advanced academic training in broad areas of Judaic scholarship, with intensive specialization in one area in preparation for an academic career. The degree certifies that the recipient is qualified to teach a wide range of Judaica at the undergraduate level and to train graduate students in his/her field of specialization. It also requires knowledge of foreign languages and may require course work at other institutions participating in a consortium with Kekst. It is a full-time program.

Students working toward the PhD may specialize in one of the following academic areas:

- Hebrew Bible and Its Interpretation
- Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures
- Medieval and Early Modern Jewish Studies
- Modern Jewish Studies

A minimum of 30 credits of graduate course work beyond the master's degree in Judaica is required. Twenty-one credits are to be in the area of specialization and ancillary subjects; the remainder may be distributed according to the student's needs. All programs must be worked out in consultation with the program advisor and require the advisor's advance approval. PhD students must pursue the degree on a full-time basis.

Students pursuing the PhD require a knowledge of foreign languages and may be required to do course work at other institutions participating in our consortium in order to achieve proficiency in the necessary languages.

Upon successful completion of all requirements for the PhD other than the dissertation, a student may apply for the degree of MPhil.

Prerequisites

In addition to any specific program requirements, students must complete the following prerequisite courses, demonstrate that the same materials were taken for credit previously, or show proficiency by examination:

BIB 5011: Introduction to Hebrew Bible

An introduction to the contents, structure, and themes of the Hebrew Bible. Integrated with that content, the course will also introduce students to a variety of methods in the study of Bible, both traditional and modern.

TAL 5025: Introduction to Rabbinic Text Study

An introduction to the major works of the classical rabbinic canon produced by the Rabbis in late antiquity. The Mishnah, Tosefta, halakhic midrashim, aggadic midrashim, and the Talmud

Bavli and Talmud Yerushalmi will be considered in light of the historical and theological setting in which each work was produced, its literary characteristics, and its relationship to the other works of the classical rabbinic canon. Students should take this course after completing both BIB 5011 and demonstrating Hebrew proficiency at the level of HEB 2201.

MDS 5102: Classics of the Jewish Tradition

A focus on the classics of the medieval and modern age, considering the social, religious, and historical significance of each of the works against the background of the period in which it was written. This seminar must be taken during the first year of graduate study if the student is required to take it.

Hebrew Requirements:

All entering students must take the Hebrew placement examination online. To receive the degree, students must demonstrate a proficiency in Hebrew equivalent to the level of HEB 5999: Reading Academic Hebrew Texts. Beginning with the first semester of matriculation, students must study Hebrew every semester until this proficiency is attained.

Prior to taking the Comprehensive Examination, doctoral students are required to pass a proficiency exam in reading Hebrew academic texts, for which HEB 5998: Introduction to Reading Academic Hebrew Texts and HEB 5999: Reading Academic Hebrew Texts provide the requisite skills.

Hebrew and prerequisite courses listed above are generally not counted toward the credit minimum.

Course Work

At least 30 credits of graduate course work beyond the master's degree in the field are required. Twenty-one credits are to be in a student's specialization and ancillary subjects; the remainder may be distributed according to the student's needs. All programs must be worked out in consultation with the program advisor and require the advisor's advance approval.

First Year Review

The candidacy of each first-year PhD student will be reviewed after the first year of residence, generally in the student's third semester. The student's advisor, in conjunction with the dean, will review the progress the student has made to date and assess the student's potential to complete the degree. If the advisor or the dean is not satisfied with the student's progress or potential, the student will be dropped from the PhD program but will be allowed to complete the academic year in progress.

Foreign Language Requirements

Every PhD candidate must demonstrate reading proficiency in German and at least one other modern research language to be determined by the candidate's program. Some programs require proficiency in additional languages as well. Proficiency can be demonstrated by one of three options. First, by examination. Foreign language examinations are scheduled through the Kekst Graduate School office. Use of a dictionary is permitted during the exam. Second, by course work completed within the previous four years. Two years of study of a foreign language on the undergraduate level with a grade of B or better each semester of the second year will be accepted in lieu of the examination. The third option is successful completion of the second semester of a yearlong reading course with a grade of B or better. Foreign language requirements must be completed prior to submitting a dissertation proposal for approval.

Comprehensive Examinations

All doctoral programs require a comprehensive examination or series of examinations in the field of specialization and related ancillary subjects. It is to be taken upon completion of all required course work and foreign language examinations. The comprehensive examination will be graded on the following scale: pass with distinction, pass, or fail. A student who fails the examination may take it once more. A second failure automatically terminates the student's participation in the PhD program.

The Dissertation

Upon completion of all course and examination requirements, the student must select an appropriate dissertation topic for an original contribution to the area of research. A written proposal must be submitted to the advisor for approval. In most programs, the student will then be asked to bring the dissertation proposal to a committee of faculty members, including the advisor, for further discussion of the proposal. If the committee does not approve the proposal, the student may submit one revised proposal. If the revised proposal is not approved, the student's participation in the PhD program will be terminated. Both the proposal and the proposal committee's approval are then submitted to the Kekst Graduate School Office for final approval. The dissertation is written under the direct guidance of the advisor who approved the proposal, and a second member of the faculty selected by the advisor and the student in consultation with the dean. Dissertations are written in English.

After the dissertation is approved by the advisor and the second reader, it is defended before a committee. The committee consists of at least five members: the advisor, the second reader, and three other faculty members, one of whom is from another JTS program and one of whom is from another institution. The committee will be determined by the dean, the advisor, and the student. Copies of the approved dissertation must be submitted to the Gershon Kekst Graduate School Office for distribution to the members of the committee at least eight weeks before the defense. A student must apply for permission to defend the dissertation during the registration period of the semester in which they plan to defend. The defense committee may approve the dissertation as submitted, accept it with minor or major revisions, or reject it. If major revisions are required, a subcommittee will be appointed by the defense-committee chair and advisor in consultation with the dean to review the

revised dissertation. Rejection of a dissertation automatically terminates the student's participation in the PhD program.

After final approval by the defense committee or the subcommittee, the dissertation shall be finalized for deposit before the next semester starts. Guidelines for the preparation and deposit of doctoral dissertations are available in the Kekst Graduate School Office.

DHL Programs: Course of Study

The Doctor of Hebrew Literature degree at the Gershon Kekst Graduate School is designed for students who wish to pursue advanced academic work in a field of Jewish studies, but do not wish to pursue a traditional academic career.

The degree certifies that recipients are qualified to teach in their field at the undergraduate level as well as in a variety of non-university settings. Students may pursue the degree on a part-time basis.

Those who would benefit from this outstanding training include mid-career professionals who have master's-level competency in Jewish studies and want the rigor of a doctoral degree, but who are not interested in a full-time career in academia.

Programs leading to the degree of doctor of Hebrew Literature are available in Hebrew Bible and Its Interpretation, Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures, Medieval and Early Modern Jewish Studies, and Modern Jewish Studies.

Prerequisites

Students must complete the following prerequisite courses, demonstrate that the same materials were taken for credit previously, or show proficiency by examination:

MDS 5102: Classics of the Jewish Tradition

A focus on the classics of the medieval and modern age, considering the social, religious, and historical significance of each of the works against the background of the period in which it was written. This seminar must be taken during the first year of graduate study.

BIB 5011: Introduction to the Hebrew Bible

An introduction to the contents, structure, and themes of the Hebrew Bible. Integrated with that content, the course will also introduce students to a variety of methods in the study of Bible, both traditional and modern.

TAL 5025: Introduction to Rabbinic Literature

An introduction to the major works of the classical rabbinic canon produced by the Rabbis in late antiquity. The Mishnah, Tosefta, halakhic midrashim, aggadic midrashim, and Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds will be considered in light of the historical and theological setting in

which each work was produced, its literary characteristics, and its relationship to the other works of the classical rabbinic canon. Students should take this course after completing both BIB 5011 and demonstrating Hebrew proficiency at the level of HEB 2201.

HEB 2103: Alef 3 (Advanced Beginner)

All entering students must take the Hebrew-placement examination and demonstrate knowledge of at least one year of college-level Hebrew, placing into HEB 2103 or higher. Certain fields may require a more advanced Hebrew background upon admission.

To receive the degree, students must demonstrate proficiency in Hebrew equivalent to the level of HEB 5998 (Reading Hebrew Academic Texts). Students must demonstrate Hebrew language proficiency at the HEB 5998 level before they are able to take a comprehensive examination.

Hebrew and prerequisite courses listed immediately above are not counted toward the overall credit minimum.

Course Work

A minimum of 30 credits of graduate course work beyond the master's degree in Jewish Studies or a related field is required. Twenty-one credits are to be in the field of specialization. A minimum of 18 credits must be taken in residence at the New York campus. All courses must be approved by the advisor.

First Year Review

The candidacy of each first-year DHL student will be reviewed after the first year, generally during the student's third semester. The student's advisor and area coordinator, in conjunction with the dean, will review the progress the student has made and assess the student's potential to complete the degree. If the advisor or dean is not satisfied with the student's progress or potential, the student will be dropped from the DHL program but will be allowed to complete the current academic year.

**Academic Areas
and
Degree Programs**

Hebrew Bible and its Interpretation

Area Coordinator: Dr. Robert Harris
Undergraduate Advisor: Dr. Alan Cooper
MA Advisor: Dr. Benjamin Sommer
Doctoral Advisor: Dr. Robert Harris

Hebrew Bible and Its Interpretation is dedicated to the study of the Hebrew Bible in its Ancient Near Eastern contexts and the history of its interpretation in ancient, medieval, and contemporary interpretive modalities. It encompasses the history of ancient Israel and Judah; archaeology, history and the languages and literatures of the Ancient Near East; the study of ancient and medieval Jewish exegesis; and the full range of modern historical-critical methodologies and modern literary theories.

Bible offers an undergraduate major, a master's program, and two doctoral programs, the PhD and DHL degrees. Bible is also a significant area of study for students in the JTS Rabbinical School, Cantorial School, and Davidson School. Bible faculty serve as mentors and instructors for students enrolled across these various schools and programs.

Core Faculty

- Alan Cooper, Elaine Ravich Professor of Jewish Studies, Bible
- Robert Harris, Professor of Bible and Ancient Semitic Languages
- Amy Kalmanofsky, Blanche and Romie Shapiro Professor, Bible, Dean of List College and the Kekst Graduate School
- Yael Landman, Assistant Professor of Bible
- Benjamin D. Sommer, Professor of Bible and Ancient Semitic Languages

Associated Instructors

- Stephen P. Garfinkel, Emeritus Professor of Hebrew Bible and its Interpretation
- Walter Herzberg, Assistant Professor Emeritus of Hebrew Bible and Its Interpretation and Professional Pastoral Skills
- David Marcus, Professor Emeritus of Bible and Masorah
- Stephen A. Geller, Irma Cameron Milstein Professor Emeritus in Bible and Ancient Semitic Languages
- David Moster, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Bible
- Steven Fassberg, Adjunct Professor, Hebrew University Caspar Levias Chair in Ancient Semitic Languages
- Miriam Feldmann Kaye, Adjunct Associate Professor, Bar-Ilan University Faculty of Jewish Studies

Bachelor of Arts

The undergraduate program in Bible features the study of Bible in its ancient Near Eastern setting using a variety of historical critical methodologies and incorporating the history of its exegesis.

Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

By graduation, Bible majors will be able to...

1. Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of the structure, content, and themes of the Hebrew Bible.
2. Apply a range of technical skills to interpreting biblical texts, including through demonstrating familiarity with critical scholarship relating to the texts and composition of the Hebrew Bible.
3. Demonstrate a core understanding of the ancient Near Eastern context in which biblical literature was composed.
4. Read Biblical Hebrew, following the narrative of Genesis through Kings without significant use of a biblical lexicon.
5. Write expository essays that have clear structure, composition, and consistent citational style, and that incorporate primary and/or secondary sources to develop the argument of the essay.

BA Major Requirements for Bible Majors

The BA degree requires 30 credits (generally 10 courses) towards the major, beyond the core curriculum requirements. Courses are chosen in consultation with the major advisor. Students may apply to write a senior thesis, completed through the year-long List College Thesis Seminar; if accepted, the thesis fulfills the final requirement of the major. Course requirements are distributed as follows:

- BIB 5560: Biblical Grammar (3 credits)
- BIB 3009: Historical Critical Methodologies (3 credits)
- One course (3 credits) covering all or part of the Torah and appropriate secondary literature
- One course (3 credits) covering all or part of the *Nevi'im* and appropriate secondary literature
- One course (3 credits) covering all or part of the *Ketuvim* and appropriate secondary literature
- One course (3 credits) on Rabbinic Exegesis/Parshanut (e.g., *Miqra'ot Gedolot*, Pentateuch with Rashi)
- Three courses (9 credits) of Bible electives chosen in consultation with the major advisor
- One course (3 credits) senior seminar, senior thesis or an upper level elective in Bible

Master of Arts

The MA degree in Hebrew Bible, administered through the Gershon Kekst Graduate School, consists of 30 credits and is designed to be completed within two years of full-time study.

Master of Arts Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes for the MA in Hebrew Bible build upon those for the BA, with the understanding that the BA outcomes are reinforced and mastered through the MA program.

Upon completion of the MA degree in Bible, students will be able to...

1. Use a thorough understanding of the contents of the Hebrew Bible and the modern methodologies of its study to compose academic essays that make significant interpretations and well-evidenced arguments related to biblical texts
2. Define the major modern historical-critical methodologies for studying the Hebrew Bible, including: text criticism, source criticism, form criticism, and literary criticism.
3. Describe the impact of archaeology on the study of the Hebrew Bible.
4. Relate the study of the Hebrew Bible to core Ancient Near Eastern cognate literature.
5. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of Biblical Hebrew grammar, including a strong grasp of the core vocabulary of the Hebrew Bible.
 - a. Students should be able to translate any prose passage
 - b. Students will be able to distinguish between prose and poetry, including through identifying the distinct syntax that characterizes each.
6. Participate in professional academic and disciplinary events, developing proficiency in professional norms and discussions through regular attendance at Bible area lectures and lunch seminars and contributions to the annual Society of Biblical Literature conference.
7. Utilize relevant software, search engines, bibliographic tools, and library resources to enhance their study.

Master of Arts Degree Requirements

Prerequisites

Students entering the program must meet the requirements for the Kekst Graduate School, including Hebrew language proficiency. Any courses that a student must take in order to achieve the required Hebrew proficiency level may be taken while enrolled, but credits from these courses will not count towards the overall degree.

Courses

The MA requires 30 credits, including the core requirements of the Kekst Graduate School. The MA program is designed to be completed within 2 years of full-time study. The following courses are required:

- MDS 5102: Classics of the Jewish Tradition or the equivalent (3 credits)
- 7 courses (21 credits) in Bible, including one seminar
 - One course (3 credits) in medieval Biblical exegesis
 - One course (3 credits) of biblical Hebrew grammar
 - Two course (6 credits) of Hebrew Bible texts
 - One course (3 credits) with an emphasis on historical critical methodologies
 - Two courses (6 credits) of electives in Bible or related areas of study
 - RLC 5025: Introduction to Rabbinic Literature or an advanced course in rabbinic literatures commonly fills 3 credits of this requirement
 - Note that students who intend to pursue a doctorate in Bible should take most of these electives in Bible

To be awarded the MA degree, students complete these course requirements **and** must satisfactorily complete a comprehensive examination, taken in the final semester of enrollment.

MA Exams and Degree Completion

Students must complete an oral or written exam covering selected chapters in the Hebrew Bible and its academic study, developed in consultation with the MA advisor.

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Through the PhD program, doctoral students refine their critical textual and content knowledge of the Bible and the culture of Ancient Israel and related civilizations. Students also advance their knowledge of the history of the reception of the Hebrew Bible in later cultures, and of its place in the development of Jewish culture as a whole. PhD graduates are prepared to hold academic appointments at the university level and to produce original scholarship in the field of biblical studies.

The PhD course of study is organized around two methodological approaches: Hebrew philology and another approach chosen by the student. As early as possible, a specialization will be selected from the following (with the guidance of a departmental advisor): anthropology, comparative law, comparative literature, hermeneutics (including traditional Jewish exegesis), historiography, linguistics (Hebrew/Semitic), literary criticism, religion/theology, Semitic philology, sociology, and textual criticism.

Coursework provides training in the relevant methodological approaches, enabling students to pursue original analytic work and research in their area of interest for the dissertation. Following coursework, PhD students complete comprehensive examinations demonstrating their preparation for pursuing

original research, then spend their final years in the program researching and writing a substantial piece of original scholarship while they also gain professional experience teaching Bible and actively participate in the academic life of the area and of the broader field. The PhD degree also includes thorough training in Semitic and other languages necessary for advanced philological, textual, and comparative study of the Hebrew Bible.

PhD Learning Outcomes

As with the MA, the PhD builds upon those outcomes defined for the BA and MA, which are understood to be mastered through the PhD. Furthermore, upon completion of the PhD program, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate advanced content knowledge of the Bible.
2. Analyze the textual notes of *Biblica Hebraica* and of standard modern critical commentaries.
3. Describe the major content and critical issues in all areas of Biblical Studies, including the history of the biblical text and Masoretica, biblical history and archaeology; law and institutions; major traditions and concepts of biblical religion (history of ideas and comparative religion); the reception of the Hebrew Bible (i.e. ancient and medieval rabbinic exegesis) and the history of the field.
4. Author critical original scholarship in the field of Biblical Studies.
5. Actively participate in academic debates and collegial activities with other scholars in the field.
6. Use advanced Semitic language skills to evaluate existing scholarship that analyzes Akkadian, Aramaic, and Ugaritic texts and produce new scholarship that requires analysis of texts in these languages.
7. Incorporate advanced knowledge and reading ability of the ancient versions of the Bible that were translated into Greek, Latin, and Aramaic into their research and teaching.
8. Read and apply relevant scholarly literature in French, German, and Modern Hebrew.
9. Effectively teach Bible and Biblical Studies at the university level.

PhD Degree Requirements

Prerequisite and Admissions Requirements

Students must have a master's degree in Hebrew Bible or the equivalent prior to admittance. All students must demonstrate reading proficiency in German, Modern Hebrew, and one other modern research language.

Courses

In addition to courses required of all students in Gershon Kekst Graduate School, and a minimum of 30 credits beyond the MA (see above); the precise number of required courses will be assessed upon admission. Up to 12 credits (four courses) taken at the graduate level at another university may be counted toward this total.

Depending on the proposed area of specialization, students will also be required to take ancient Semitic and/or classical languages necessary for their topic of study, determined in consultation with the doctoral advisor.

Required courses include:

- Five courses in biblical texts (15 credits)
- Two courses in biblical history, religion, or law (6 credits)
- One course in medieval biblical exegesis (3 credits)
Note: Two of the above courses must be research seminars with major papers. The area coordinator can advise on which courses fulfill this requirement.
- Two courses in biblical Hebrew or comparative Semitics (6 credits)

Comprehensive Examinations

The examinations proceed in two stages. First, a set of four oral examinations on Bible text, language, and content (*beqi'ut*): Torah, Former Prophets, Latter Prophets, Writings. Each one is administered by a single faculty member. Students should be in contact with faculty members to determine a specific outline and contents requirement of the exam

For the remainder of the examinations, students must compose three essays on topics of their choosing, normally in the areas of biblical text criticism, history of Israel, and religion of Israel, respectively (the three areas are negotiable depending on the student's specific interests). Following submission of these essays and assuming that they are deemed acceptable, there is a follow-up oral examination in which all associated Bible faculty may participate. The oral examination can include discussion/critique of the essays or range into other topics of the examiners' choosing to test for general knowledge, probe potential areas of specialization, etc.

Dissertation

The dissertation should be a book-length monograph that offers an original contribution to the study of Bible and that applies the student's selected discipline and any pertinent methodologies.

Following the completion of the comprehensive examinations, students complete a written proposal for their dissertation topic, in consultation with their advisor.

At the onset or early in the process of proposing a dissertation, the faculty advisor creates a committee to supervise and ultimately judge the worthiness of the dissertation. This committee consists of five members: the dissertation advisor; a second reader; an additional faculty member of the JTS Bible faculty; a JTS faculty member outside of the Bible Department; an outside reader (if the second reader is either outside the Department or the Seminary faculty, an additional member of the Bible faculty will join the committee.

Upon completion of a first draft of the dissertation and upon the recommendation of the faculty advisor, and the second reader, the dissertation is distributed to the remaining three members of the committee. At a date to be determined by all parties, the student must formally defend the dissertation in the presence of the entire committee. Following the formal oral defense, the committee will meet in camera to either accept the dissertation as is; require minor or major revisions; or reject the dissertation. Rejection of a dissertation automatically terminates the student's participation in the PhD program.

Following a successful defense, the dissertation shall be prepared in final form for deposit at least six weeks before the date on which degrees are conferred. Guidelines for the preparation and deposit of doctoral dissertations are available in the Gershon Kekst Graduate School Office.

Doctor of Hebrew Literature

The DHL program offers a more generalist scope of study for aspiring Bible scholars. It can be completed on a part-time, low-residency basis and is ideally suited to those with significant academic and/or professional background in Bible who wish to obtain advanced knowledge and skills in its interpretation. Completion of the DHL in Bible indicates one's ability to pursue advanced research and to teach at the undergraduate and extra-curricular levels.

DHL Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate thorough content knowledge of the Hebrew Bible.
2. Explain the contours of biblical scholarship over time, defining major currents and trends in the field of biblical studies.
3. Teach Bible and biblical studies at a level accessible to adult education and religious organizations.
4. Read Biblical Hebrew with an advanced level of comprehension
5. Use proficiency in modern Hebrew to contribute to their understanding of biblical studies and biblical scholarship.
6. Produce critical examinations of biblical studies scholarship, synthesizing research on a given issue into an original analysis.

DHL Degree Requirements

Prerequisites

Students must have a master's degree in Bible or Jewish Studies. Further course work may be required in the case of students who have an MA in Jewish Studies. Students must pass an examination in biblical Hebrew grammar before entering the program or early on in the student's program of study.

Courses

In addition to courses required of all students in Gershon Kekst Graduate School, 30 graduate credits beyond the MA are required, to be selected from the following list:

- Two advanced text courses (6 credits)
- Two courses in biblical law, religion, or history (6 credits)
- One course in medieval exegesis (3 credits)

Note: Two of the above courses must be research seminars with major papers.

- One course in a Semitic language other than Hebrew (3 credits)
- Two courses in electives in the area of specialization (6 credits)
- Two additional courses, to be selected in consultation with the advisor (6 credits)

Students may be asked to audit courses in areas in which the advisor believes they require further background study. All students must display a basic familiarity with the particulars of biblical literature of the type implied by the traditional term *beqi'ut* (expertise), to be established by examination.

Comprehensive Examinations

The examinations proceed in two stages. First, a set of four oral examinations on Bible text, language, and content (*beqi'ut*): Torah, Former Prophets, Latter Prophets, Writings. Each one is administered by a single faculty member. Students should be in contact with faculty members to determine a specific outline and contents requirement of the exam

For the remainder of the examinations, students must compose an essay on a topic of their choosing, normally in the area of their proposed dissertation topic.

DHL Dissertation

A candidate is required to write a dissertation in their field of specialization. The dissertation must be a contribution to the field of biblical studies and may be a synthesis of extant scholarship on a selected topic. A written proposal for the dissertation must be submitted for approval to a faculty advisor. The dissertation is then to be written under the supervision of the faculty advisor who approved it.

Upon completion of a first draft of the dissertation and the faculty advisor's recommendation, the advisor and dean shall select and appoint one more reader. Upon final approval by both readers, the dissertation requirement shall be considered fulfilled.

Thereafter, the dissertation shall be prepared in final form for deposit at least six weeks before the date on which degrees are conferred. Guidelines for the preparation and deposit of doctoral dissertations are available in the Gershon Kekst Graduate School Office.

Rejection of a dissertation automatically terminates the student's participation in the DHL program.

Jewish Gender and Women's Studies

Program Chair: Dr. Stefanie Siegmund

The program in Jewish Gender and Women's Studies (JGWS) at JTS offers students the opportunity to examine Jewish history, literature, and culture through the critical lens of gender. Current course offerings focus on Jewish women's history and women and gender in rabbinic literature and Halakhah, in the Bible, and in Jewish ethical thought. Many students bring a strong queer studies, women's studies, or sexuality studies background with them to JTS; other students simply bring a curiosity and openness to exploring Jewish tradition.

Students in our BA and MA programs ordinarily focus on one historical period or discipline while choosing courses from among the many areas of study taught at JTS. They may also take complementary courses in women's, feminist, or queer studies at neighboring institutions including Columbia University or Barnard College.

The Program in Jewish Gender and Women's Studies is a place where students join faculty who are committed to the feminist analysis of traditional Jewish texts and institutions and to the restoration of lost and muted voices. We encourage students to bring their creativity into their work and aim to teach and promote a gendered understanding of all areas of Judaic studies. Student learning and life is supported by the many feminist, queer, and gender-focused activities and organizations associated with the larger nearby colleges and universities of New York City.

Core Faculty

- Amy Kalmanofsky, Professor of Bible
- Marjorie Lehman, Professor of Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures
- Stefanie Siegmund, Associate Professor of Jewish History, Women's League Chair in Jewish Gender and Women's Studies
- Sarah Wolf, Assistant Professor of Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures

Associated Instructors

- Shira Billet, Assistant Professor of Jewish Thought and Ethics
- David Kraemer, Professor of Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures

Bachelor of Arts

Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

By graduation, students will be able to...

1. Use (in writing and discussion) a gender-studies lexicon that is precise and nuanced and appropriate to each subfield or discipline of Jewish Studies.

2. Differentiate between the constructedness and performance of gender in Jewish texts, on the one hand (e.g., Biblical, legal, mystical, literary, and images found in popular myth and culture); and the real historical status, activities, and experiences of Jewish women, on the other.
3. Explain how Jewish Studies scholars have reworked known sources and found new sources, texts, and cultural spaces in the history of the Jewish people that allow us to learn about the experience of women and gender-nonconforming minorities.

BA Major Requirements

30 credits chosen in consultation with the program advisor, distributed as follows:

- Seven courses (21 credits) in Jewish gender and women's studies, chosen from at least three different fields or disciplines (e.g., Jewish history, Jewish literature, Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures, Jewish Ethics, Bible).
 - Courses that do not have a "JGW" prefix may sometimes, with *prior* approval of the instructor and the advisor, be adapted for credit toward the major.
- Two additional courses (6 credits) in feminist, gender, queer, or women's studies, to be taken at Columbia University or Barnard College, chosen in consultation with the advisor.
- List College Senior Seminar, honors thesis, or advanced elective course in the major field (3 credits)

Note: Credit is not given for courses taken outside JTS when a similar course is offered at JTS.

Master of Arts

Students who pursue the MA in Jewish Gender and Women's Studies see the Jewish tradition critically as feminists, and sometimes with ambivalence, and come to JTS explore it deeply, seriously, and creatively. You will take graduate courses in bible, Jewish ethics, rabbinic literature, and history that make the constructedness of gender central to the analysis of texts, and the lived experience of women central to the exploration of history. The MA thesis or creative project, which you complete in your second year, can help launch your career (related to gender equity, education, or in the Jewish professional world) or it could prepare you for doctoral studies or future work in the creative arts.

The MA is designed to take one to two years of full-time study to complete. Students may be eligible for advanced standing or other degree completion timelines in consultation with the advisor.

MA Learning Outcomes

Students completing the MA will meet all outcomes of the BA at a more advanced level, as well as be able to...

1. Recognize passages from Jewish texts that have been considered formative in creating or validating a historically androcentric rabbinic culture and explain the way that gender is constructed in those texts.
2. Independently analyze Jewish texts with a gender analysis or from a queered or feminist point of view.
3. Produce new work (academic or creative) based on original analysis of sources using feminist, queer, or other critical lenses

MA Admission Requirements

Students interested in the MA in JGWS are expected to meet the general admissions requirements for all Kekst students.

MA Degree Requirements

Courses

In addition to language courses required of all students in the Gershon Kekst Graduate School, 30 graduate credits (5000 level and above) are required:

- MDS 5102: Classics of the Jewish Tradition (3 credits)
- One course in feminist or queer theory (3 credits) to be taken at any of the graduate schools in the New York Theological Consortium Program and chosen in consultation with the advisor.
- Five elective courses (15 credits) in Jewish Gender and Women's Studies at JTS.
- Three additional courses (9 credits), selected in consultation with the advisor.
 - This requirement may be met in part by taking Bible 5011 and/or RLC 5025 (for students who have not been exempted);
 - Three credits of this requirement may be met with a second gender-studies class from a cooperating institution.

Note: A course that does not have a JGW cross-listing may, under certain circumstances, be taken to fulfill elective courses when the instructor considers it possible to adapt the materials and/or assessments, and with approval, in advance, of the Program Chair.

Master's Thesis or Capstone Project

Students must complete a master's thesis, a work of original research of about 40 pages. Students work closely with a JTS faculty member who agrees to serve as advisor; the chair of the Program will serve as co-advisor. The paper should fall within one of the disciplinary areas currently taught at JTS. Writing done for another course may inform this project, but a paper written previously will not fulfill the requirement. Prior to beginning the thesis, at the end of their second semester students propose their topic, design a research plan and schedule, and identify their primary advisor. Work on the thesis must be completed before graduation, usually in the fourth term.

An alternative project may be possible for creative artists who design a project (e.g., creative writing, or visual, musical, or performance arts) and can be mentored by an appropriate JTS faculty member.

Such projects require substantial planning on the part of the student to ensure the availability of appropriate advisement and the evaluation of the student's work by qualified faculty. Students interested in pursuing an alternative MA project should consult with the Program Director as soon as possible to begin this process.

Jewish History

BA and MA Advisor: Dr. Benjamin Gampel

Core Faculty

- David Fishman, Professor of Jewish History
- Benjamin Gampel, Professor of Jewish History, Dina and Eli Field Family Chair in Jewish History
- Shuly Rubin Schwartz, Chancellor, Irving Lehrman Research Professor of American Jewish History
- Stefanie Siegmund, Associate Professor of History, Women's League Chair in Jewish Gender and Women's Studies
- Jack Wertheimer, Joseph and Martha Mendelson Professor of American Jewish History

Associated Instructors

- Brian Smollett, Assistant Professor of Modern Jewish History

Bachelor of Arts

BA Major Course Requirements

30 credits (ten courses) distributed as follows:

- HIS 1011: Medieval Jewish History (3 credits)
- HIS 5117: Jews and Judaism in the Ancient World (3 credits)
- HIS 5406: Modern Jewish History (3 credits)
- One course in American Jewish History (3 credits)
- Five courses (15 credits) of Jewish history electives, chosen in consultation with the major advisor
- Senior seminar, senior thesis, or advanced capstone elective (3 credits)

Master of Arts

MA students must meet the admissions standards and prerequisites required of all Kekst graduate students.

MA Degree Requirements:

Courses

In addition to courses required of all students in The Graduate School, 30 graduate credits are required as follows:

- MDS 5102: Classics of the Jewish Tradition (3 credits)
- HIS 5117: Jews and Judaism in the Ancient World (3 credits)
- HIS 6313: Under Cross and Crescent: Jews and Judaism in the Middle Ages (3 credits)
- HIS 5406: Modern Jewish History (3 credits)
- Six additional courses in Jewish history (18 credits)
 - Students may choose courses from all periods of Jewish history but are urged to distribute these courses to prepare for the comprehensive examination, which covers all periods of Jewish history.

Note: If a student has previously taken an analogous course to the requirements at the undergraduate level, the student will be required to take other advanced history coursework as determined by the advisor.

Comprehensive Exams

Students must satisfactorily complete a one-hour oral examination on selected primary and secondary sources from all periods of Jewish history. Examination topics are identified in advance through student consultation with the advisor.

Jewish Languages and Hebrew Language Program

Area Coordinator: Miriam Meir

JTS offers a wide array of languages needed for the study of classical Jewish texts and for engaging in dialogue with contemporary Jewish communities throughout the world. Every year JTS offers at least eight levels of Hebrew language study. Depending on the program needs in any given year, additional languages offered can include Akkadian, Aramaic, Judeo-Arabic, Ladino, Syriac, Ugaritic, Yiddish, and languages for inscriptional literature.

Core Instructors

- Miriam Meir, Senior Lecturer of Hebrew Language
- Sarah Hochfeld, Lecturer of Hebrew Language

Associated Instructors

- Cila Alon, Adjunct Instructor of Hebrew Language
- Ilona Ben-Moshe, Adjunct Instructor of Hebrew Language
- Orna Goldman, Adjunct Instructor of Hebrew Language
- Hagit Halperin, Adjunct Instructor of Hebrew Language
- Aaron Koller, Adjunct Professor of Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures (Aramaic)
- Nachum Lerner, Adjunct Instructor of Yiddish
- Nina Neshet, Adjunct Instructor of Hebrew Language
- Rebecca Rydel, Adjunct Instructor of Hebrew Language
- Achia Anzi, Adjunct Instructor of Hebrew Language
- Hannah Zalis-Anzi, Adjunct Instructor of Hebrew Language
- Nitza Krohn, Assistant Professor Emerita of Hebrew Language Instruction

Hebrew Language Program

The goal of the Hebrew Language program at JTS is to develop Hebrew language literacy in students whose native language is not Hebrew. Through this program, students acquire linguistic knowledge and competence in the use of Hebrew for academic, professional, and conversational purposes.

While acquiring proficiency in modern Hebrew is at the core of the program—and classes are conducted in Hebrew—biblical, rabbinic, and other premodern Hebrew texts are also studied.

The use of educational technology at the Hebrew Language Lab and other online resources for linguistic and cultural enrichment is an integral part of the program. In addition to required courses, the Hebrew Language program offers a number of electives designed to meet an array of needs and interests.

Every Hebrew course at JTS has a robust set of level-specific learning outcomes that are shared with enrolled students each semester. Writing, reading, and speaking skills are all developed and assessed through frequent assignments and lessons. Instructors work closely with students to develop their language skills, accommodate learning needs, and ensure that all students at JTS are able to achieve their language goals.

The program offers semester-long courses at the beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. Most of the regular courses are also offered during the summer. The program also offers intensive live, interactive online courses. For more information, please contact hebrew@jtsa.edu.

A free tutorial service, **Hebrew-On-Demand (HOD)**, is offered three hours weekly by Hebrew Language faculty; affordable short-term individual tutoring is available as well.

Each JTS school determines the course level its students must complete in order to fulfill its Hebrew language requirements.

In order to be placed in the appropriate-level Hebrew course, all incoming students take a written Hebrew language placement examination prior to the beginning of the new academic year. Advancement to the next Hebrew level depends upon satisfactory achievement and is based on multiple assessment measures.

Sample List of Courses in Hebrew Language:

- HEB 1001: Alef 1
- HEB 1101: Alef 2
- HEB 2103: Alef 3
- HEB 2201: Bet 1
- HEB 5203: Bet 2
- HEB 5205: Gimel 1
- HEB 5206: Gimel 2
- HEB 5300: Advanced Hebrew Skills
- HEB 5301: Dalet 1
- HEB 5303: Dalet 2
- HEB 5009: Intensive Hebrew Grammar
- HEB 5221: Advanced Comprehension and Communication
- HEB 5572: Hebrew Poetry in Song
- HEB 5998: Introduction to Reading Academic Hebrew
- HEB 5999: Reading Academic Hebrew

Hebrew Fellows Program (שוחרים)

Students in the Hebrew Fellows Program commit to taking a certain number of courses taught in Hebrew (according to individual schools; see below). The program also incorporates Hebrew reading groups, a parashat shavu'a club, and a lunchtime Hebrew Table, as well as volunteer opportunities to

help promote Hebrew within the culture of JTS. Students who successfully complete the program graduate with the distinction “with honors in Hebrew” on their diplomas.

Requirements for Admission to the Hebrew Fellows Program by School

List College

Students may apply for admission to the program after completing HEB 5203: Intermediate Hebrew II or if they are exempted from Hebrew on the basis of the Hebrew placement exam. Hebrew Fellows will take three courses taught in Hebrew and participate regularly in Hebrew Fellows events. One course may be transferred from another institution (e.g., a school in Israel).

The Rabbinical School

After returning to JTS from their year in Israel, students will take three courses of their own choosing taught in Hebrew, achieving at least a 3.33 GPA (B+) average.

William Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education

Hebrew Fellows will complete a Hebrew language course on level Gimel or higher (HEB 5205 or 5221) and take three courses taught in Hebrew, achieving at least a 3.33 GPA (B+) average in them.

Gershon Kekst Graduate School

Hebrew Fellows will complete the Hebrew language requirements for the degree and take three courses taught in Hebrew, achieving at least a 3.33 (B+) average in them. Courses will be selected in consultation with the academic advisor.

Summer Hebrew Program

For those who would like to take their Hebrew language skills to the next level, JTS offers a high-quality, intensive Hebrew language program during the summer. Seven-week sessions are offered on three elementary levels; five-week sessions are offered at intermediate and advanced levels.

All incoming summer students take the Hebrew Placement Exam to be placed in the appropriate course.

Hebrew Courses are offered during [JTS Summer Sessions](#). Students in our [Nishma](#) program may also take Hebrew.

Who It's For

Summer Hebrew courses are for anyone interested in improving their Hebrew language skills. The program is particularly useful for undergraduate and graduate students working toward fulfillment of their Hebrew language requirement, as well as for prospective Rabbinical School and Cantorial School

students who are working toward achieving the prerequisite Hebrew language proficiency level for their program.

Students may enroll in Summer Hebrew courses on a non-credit basis. Tuition costs differ for non-credit and for-credit enrollments. Students enrolled on a non-credit basis are expected to meet all course requirements, including attendance and assignments.

What It Is

The summer Hebrew courses are equivalent to the Hebrew courses offered at JTS during the academic year. Courses develop all aspects of Hebrew language proficiency—reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension—including the ability to independently read Hebrew texts of various periods and genres, from biblical to modern.

Course materials include textbooks from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, supplemented with a diverse selection of readings from a variety of Hebrew texts.

Jewish Professional Leadership and Social Work (MA and MSW)

JTS Advisor: Dr. Rebecca Perten

JTS offers a dual-degree program through the Gershon Kekst Graduate School of JTS and Columbia University's School of Social Work (CSSW). This dual-degree program prepares students for professional leadership careers in the Jewish community. Students are admitted to both schools and attend them concurrently. Upon completion of the program, students receive both an MA in Jewish Studies from JTS and an MS in Social Work from Columbia.

Visionary faculty and Jewish communal professionals created the program more than 30 years ago with a goal still important today: to provide future Jewish communal professional leaders with the essential knowledge, skills, and experience to meet the challenge of building Jewish community in an increasingly complex world.

The curriculum at the Gershon Kekst Graduate School emphasizes an academic approach to Jewish studies. Students study Jewish history, tradition, and culture with JTS's esteemed faculty. Through elective courses, students can take advantage of the full spectrum of study available at JTS.

Admissions

Prospective students interested in Jewish Professional Leadership must apply to both JTS and CSSW. Contact Admissions at gsadmissions@jtsa.edu to learn more.

Program Requirements

Students are required to take a minimum of 72 credits in total.

The JTS MA consists of 33 credits, of which 6 credits are transferred from Columbia University's School of Social Work (CSSW). In order to fulfill the Kekst Graduate School and program requirements, a student may also need to take additional prerequisite Hebrew-language courses.

At CSSW, a minimum of 45 credits must be completed—depending on the method of concentration. Field work is an integral part of the total educational experience at CSSW, providing students opportunities to use the theoretical content learned in courses.

JTS Course Requirements

33 credits distributed as follows:

- MDS 5102: Classics of the Jewish Tradition (3 credits)
- BIB 5011: Introduction to Hebrew Bible (3 credits)

- RLC 5025: Introduction to Rabbinic Literature (3 credits)
- One course in American Jewish History (3 credits)
- One course on contemporary Jewish social issues (3 credits)
- One course in Jewish Ethics (3 credits)
- Three elective course approved by the advisor (9 credits)

Note: 6 credits are counted from the CSSW curriculum towards the JTS degree

Additional Requirements for Graduation

The social work program at CSSW provides an integrated course of study that offers a combined approach of classroom and field instruction. Depending on their particular interests, students are admitted into one of four different method areas (listed below).

Depending on the area of concentration, students must complete a minimum of 45 credits. In order to meet the requirements of any of these method areas, students must take the practice courses in the core sequence, four terms of field work, and the required background courses. Jewish Professional Leadership students are exempt from taking T660A: Human Behavior and Social Environment and the second-year field-practice core course requirements.

- Social Enterprise Administration: emphasizes building knowledge, skills, and values in administering programs
- Advanced Generalist Practice and Programming: emphasizes direct practice, community practice, movement from case to cause, development of innovative and responsive social programs, and program resources
- Policy Practice: emphasizes policy analysis and advocacy
- Advanced Clinical Social Work Practice: emphasizes assessment, intervention, and evaluation within a field of practice

Length of Study

The program can be completed in 2-3 years of full-time study. The length of time depends on the student's requirements at JTS (often based on the level of Hebrew proficiency upon enrolling) and method of concentration at CSSW. The Admissions Office and Kekst School deans can advise on expected time to completion at the time of application, and the deans will determine a student's expected trajectory at the time of admission.

Jewish Studies (MA)

Advisor: Dr. Rebecca Perten

Designed for students who wish to obtain a deep grounding in advanced Judaica (such as those planning to pursue doctoral studies or work in the non-academic professional Jewish world), this interdisciplinary MA program offers a broad overview of classical and modern Jewish studies with an emphasis on developing skills for textual analysis. Students who successfully complete the Jewish Studies MA go on to a variety of educational and professional settings, including doctoral studies and professional careers in the Jewish world.

Learning Outcomes

By graduation, students should be able to...

1. Identify key Jewish texts as well as historical and cultural trends throughout Jewish history
2. Apply intermediate Hebrew skills to reading and engaging with Jewish texts in the original language
3. Articulate an interdisciplinary approach to the study of Jewish life, thought, history, and cultural production, informed by a diversity of disciplinary methods

Degree Requirements

Prerequisites

Students must demonstrate Hebrew competency at the level of HEB 5203, either through the Hebrew courses at JTS or by exemption through examination upon entering the program. Hebrew courses taken to achieve proficiency do not count towards the overall degree.

Courses

Students must complete 33 credits, including:

- One course (3 credits) MDS 5102: Classics of the Jewish Tradition
- Two courses (6 credits) in Bible
 - One of these courses may be BIB 5011: Introduction to Hebrew Bible.
- Two courses (6 credits) in Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures
 - One of these courses may be RLC 5025: Introduction to Rabbinic Literature
- Four courses (12 credits) in the following areas (at least 3 credits in each area and 6 credits in History if MDS 5102 is included):
 - History (can include MDS 5102)
 - Thought
 - Literature

- Two courses (6 credits) of electives, chosen in consultation with the advisor

Capstone Project

Students must complete a capstone paper/project that is designed in consultation with the program advisor. The nature and content of the capstone will reflect the student's academic and professional trajectory and future goals.

Jewish Studies MA for Rabbinical School Students

For the Jewish Studies MA degree, offered through the Kekst Graduate School, students are required to take an additional 21 credits in Jewish Studies courses beyond the Rabbinical School curriculum and complete a capstone project. These credits are generally distributed as follows:

- One additional course (3 credits) in texts and interpretation (e.g. parshanut, midrash)
- One additional Bible course (3 credits)
- 15 additional credits distributed across History, Thought, and Literature

Capstone projects must be developed in consultation with the DRL deans and approved by the Kekst School deans. Capstone projects should be developed no later than the spring semester of the year before graduation (usually Year 4). Proposals must be submitted to the DRL and Kekst deans by August 15th of the year preceding graduation.

Examples of capstone projects for Rabbinical School students include the following:

- A paper (15-20 pages) synthesizing the experience of rabbinical school study
- An artistic project with an accompanying narrative that relates to the student's course of study
- Creation of a community code of ethical and halakhic conduct developed for a specific context, drawing on resources from classical and contemporary CJLS responsa
- A collection of poems or creative writing with an accompanying narrative connecting the work to the student's rabbinic education
- A curriculum for a chosen context that covers the entire arc of a selected subject and includes a minimum of six lesson plans for specific units within the curriculum.

Medieval and Early Modern Jewish Studies

Area Coordinator: Dr. Benjamin Gampel (fall 2024), Dr. Stefanie Siegmund (spring 2025)
BA Advisor and MA Advisor: Dr. Benjamin Gampel (fall), Dr. Stefanie Siegmund (spring 2025)
Doctoral Advisor: Dr. Stefanie Siegmund

The program in Medieval and Early Modern Jewish Studies enables students to investigate Jewish civilization from the fourth to seventeenth centuries in a multidisciplinary framework, primarily through coursework in the areas of history, exegetical and legal literature, and thought.

Core Faculty

- Benjamin R. Gampel, Dina and Eli Field Family Chair in Jewish History
- Stefanie Siegmund, Women's League Chair in Jewish Gender and Women's Studies
- Eitan Fishbane, Professor of Jewish Thought
- Robert Harris, Professor of Hebrew Bible and Its Interpretation

Associated Instructors

- Raymond Scheindlin, Professor Emeritus of Medieval Hebrew Literature
- Marjorie Lehman, Professor of Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures
- Jonathan Milgram, Associate Professor of Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures

Bachelor of Arts

The undergraduate program in Medieval and Early Modern Jewish Studies provides students with broad exposure to the history, literatures, and thought of Jews living within the orbit of Christendom and Islam.

Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

By graduation, students will be able to...

1. Identify the communal and demographic shifts that defined Jewish experiences from the fourth to the seventeenth centuries
2. Explain Jewish cultural production within the context of the surrounding civilizations of Christianity and Islam.
3. Analyze medieval Jewish thought, history, and literature using critical disciplinary methodologies.

BA Major Course Requirements

30 credits, chosen in consultation with the major advisor, of which 6 credits may be double-counted for a List College core requirement, as follows:

- 21 credits (7 courses), distributed across the disciplines (e.g., medieval and early modern history; medieval Hebrew literature and liturgy; religious thought; medieval or early modern rabbinic law, biblical exegesis, and Aggadah; and medieval or early modern visual and material cultures), and advanced language study. These studies should ordinarily begin with either MED 1011 / HIS 1011 (Medieval Jewish History) or MED 1012 / JTH 1012 (Medieval Jewish Thought and Theology).
- 6 credits (2 courses) of cognate study in medieval or early modern Christianity or Islam, or related history, literature, etc., to be chosen in consultation with the advisor. These courses may be taken at Columbia University, Barnard College, or elsewhere with approval.
- 3 credits (1 course) senior/capstone seminar (or Senior Honors Thesis, for those admitted).

Of the above-listed courses taken at JTS, at least one must be listed or cross-listed as JGW (Jewish Gender and Women's Studies). Of the above-listed courses taken at JTS, at least one must be a Hebrew-text intensive seminar.

Note: 3 to 6 credits (1 or 2 courses) of Advanced Hebrew (Heb 5301 or 5302) or advanced study in another language (e.g., Arabic, Latin) may be counted toward the 21 credits, with permission of the advisor.

Master of Arts

Graduate Learning Outcomes

The graduate program builds on all learning outcomes from the undergraduate program, incorporating greater content and methodological mastery into each area. Additionally, graduate students will be able to...

1. Contextualize primary and secondary sources within their appropriate literary, historical, and ideological currents
2. Articulate critical issues and debates within the contemporary field of medieval Jewish Studies
3. Apply the methods of their field of study to produce advanced critical analysis of a theme, source, text, or material related to medieval Jewish cultures.

MA Admission Requirements

Prior study of Hebrew and background in medieval and Jewish studies is recommended.

Prerequisites

Students entering the program take the following prerequisite courses if they have not had the equivalent previously:

- One course in medieval history
- One course in medieval literature
- One course in medieval philosophy

Students are permitted to register for courses counting toward the degree while fulfilling these prerequisites.

MA Degree Requirements

Courses

In addition to courses required of all students in Gershon Kekst Graduate School, 30 graduate credits are required as follows:

- MDS 5102: Classics of the Jewish Tradition (3 credits)
- 21 credits (7 courses) to be distributed among at least three of the following five broad subject areas:
 - Medieval and early modern Jewish history
 - Medieval and early modern Hebrew literature (e.g., poetry, liturgy, Midrash, Parshanut, Aggadah)
 - Medieval and early modern Jewish thought (e.g., philosophy, ethics, or Kabbalah)
 - Medieval and early modern rabbinic law
 - Medieval and early modern visual and material culture

Note: Credit toward the 21 credits may be given for up to two semesters of Advanced Hebrew in order to enable students to take Hebrew-text intensive courses. Of the above-listed courses taken at JTS, at least one must be listed or cross-listed as JGW (Jewish Gender and Women's Studies).

- 6 credits (2 courses) in related medieval or early modern studies, taken at a neighboring institution in the Consortium Program, or, with permission, in the advanced study of other relevant medieval languages, such as Latin or Arabic.

All courses are determined in consultation with the advisor.

Comprehensive Exams

A written or oral examination on selected topics, based on the student's coursework and chosen in consultation with the advisor.

Doctor of Hebrew Literature

Doctor of Hebrew Literature Degree Requirements

Courses

In addition to courses required of all students in the Gershon Kekst Graduate School, 30 graduate credits beyond the MA are required. Courses are selected in consultation with the doctoral advisor. Students who have not received an MA in Medieval and Early Modern Jewish Studies may be required to complete additional courses as prerequisite work. All courses will be determined through consultation with the advisor.

Comprehensive Examination

Upon satisfactory completion of all coursework, students must take an oral examination on selected topics in three disciplinary areas (e.g., history, philosophy, and literature) and in the area of the candidate's dissertation, including a review of the secondary literature in the area of the proposed dissertation.

Dissertation

An original monograph-length dissertation, or a series of three scholarly papers on a topic in medieval or early modern Jewish studies, to be approved by a faculty committee. The dissertation may also be a synthesis of extant scholarship on a given topic.

Doctor of Philosophy

Doctor of Philosophy Degree Requirements

Languages

In addition to languages required of all students in the Gershon Kekst Graduate School, proficiency must be demonstrated in two primary source languages (Hebrew, Arabic, or Latin) and two secondary source languages (German and French, Spanish, or Italian), prior to advancement to candidacy.

Courses

In addition to courses required of all students in the Gershon Kekst Graduate School, at least 30 graduate credits beyond the MA are required. Courses are selected in consultation with the doctoral advisor, with 21 credits focusing on the candidates' area of expertise (e.g. Medieval Jewish history or Medieval Jewish thought). Students who have not received an MA in Medieval or Early Modern Jewish Studies may be required to complete additional courses as prerequisite work. All courses are determined in consultation with the advisor.

Comprehensive Examination

Upon satisfactory completion of all coursework, candidates for the PhD must take a comprehensive examination consisting of written and oral parts. The written part consists of four essays, one in each of three disciplinary studies (e.g., history, literature, and philosophy) and a fourth in a cognate subject. After the candidate has had the opportunity to study the examiners' comments on the written part, the oral examination ensues. The four essays may be written in separate sittings spread over a semester.

Dissertation

A faculty committee must approve the dissertation proposal. The dissertation will be an original monograph-length dissertation that demonstrates the candidate's ability to pursue original research in their area of focus, to be approved by a faculty committee after an oral defense.

Modern Jewish Studies (Area)

Area Coordinator (AY 2024-2025): Brian Smollett

The Modern Jewish Studies (MJS) Academic Area encompasses undergraduate and graduate degree programs in complementary fields that are core to understanding and analyzing the modern Jewish experience. Through humanities-driven inquiry, students in Modern Jewish Studies deepen their understanding of the pivotal events, intellectual currents, and literary achievements that have shaped the modern Jewish world.

MJS includes degrees and programs in the following fields:

- Modern Jewish Studies
- Jewish Literature (BA and MA only)
- Jewish Thought (BA and MA only)
- Jewish Ethics (BA and MA only)

Core Faculty

- ◆ Shira Billet, Assistant Professor of Jewish Thought and Ethics
- ◆ Arnold Eisen, Professor of Jewish Thought
- ◆ Eitan Fishbane, Professor of Jewish Thought
- ◆ David Fishman, Professor of Jewish History
- ◆ Edna Nahshon, Professor of Jewish Theater and Drama
- ◆ Shuly Rubin Schwartz, Irving Lehrman Research Professor of American Jewish History
- ◆ Brian Smollett, Assistant Professor of Modern Jewish History and Thought
- ◆ Jack Wertheimer, Joseph and Martha Mendelson Professor of American Jewish History

Associated Instructors

- ◆ Miriam Meir, Area Coordinator of Jewish Languages, Senior Lecturer of Hebrew Language
- ◆ Rebecca Sandler Perten, Assistant Dean of List College and Kekst Graduate School, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Jewish Studies
- ◆ David Roskies, Sol and Evelyn Henkind Chair in Yiddish Literature and Culture and Professor of Jewish Literature Emeritus
- ◆ Alan Mittleman, Aaron Rabinowitz and Simon H. Rifkind Emeritus Professor of Jewish Philosophy
- ◆ Beverly Bailis, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Jewish Literature
- ◆ Jason Schulman, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Modern Jewish History

Modern Jewish Studies (Degrees)

BA, MA, and PhD Advisor: Dr. Brian Smollett

Interdisciplinary Modern Jewish Studies degrees consist of advanced, interdisciplinary study of the modern Jewish experience. The methods of study vary with the interests and concentration of the individual student, but all MJS students gain familiarity with the breadth of Jewish history, literature, and thought in the modern period (approximately 1750-1980). Electives allow students to specialize in their areas of interest, as well as explore complementary areas of study at JTS, which may include courses in Jewish Gender and Women's Studies, Jewish Ethics, and/or advanced study of Yiddish or Hebrew, amongst others.

Bachelor of Arts in Modern Jewish Studies

The BA major in Modern Jewish Studies is designed to provide the student with multidisciplinary training in the study of the modern Jewish experience, with an emphasis on religion and culture.

Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

After completing a BA degree in Modern Jewish Studies, students will be able to:

1. Identify the communal and demographic shifts that defined Jewish experiences from the eighteenth century to the present day.
2. Explain Jewish religious and cultural production in light of surrounding cultural and historical contexts.
3. Articulate the relationship of modern secularism to the broader Jewish cultural and religious canon.
4. Analyze modern sources of Jewish thought, history, and literature using critical methodologies.
5. Relate modern notions of identity (i.e. "religion," "nation," "peoplehood") to developments in Jewish culture and community.

Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements

The BA degree requires 30 credits towards the major. HIS 1012/5406: Modern Jewish History is required for all MJS majors as it introduces the major themes, events, and cultural contexts required for more advanced study. The remaining courses are distributed between modern Jewish history, Jewish thought, and modern Jewish literature. A senior seminar or advanced elective completes the MJS curriculum, selected in consultation with the advisor. Students may apply to write a senior thesis, completed through the year-long List College Thesis Seminar; if accepted, the thesis fulfills the final requirement of the major.

Required Courses for the BA

- One history survey course (3 credits) HIS 1012/5406: Modern Jewish History

- One advanced elective course (3 credits) in Modern Jewish History
- Two courses (6 credits) in Modern Jewish Thought
- Two courses (6 credits) in Modern Jewish Literature (a Hebrew beyond HEB 5203 or Yiddish language course may be used)
- Three courses (9 credits) of electives chosen in consultation with the advisor (one of these courses may be on the 1000 level)
- One course (3 credits) senior/capstone seminar or additional upper-level elective or senior thesis

Graduate Degrees in Modern Jewish Studies

The Modern Jewish Studies graduate program includes master's and doctoral degree programs. Candidates for graduate degrees select an area of specialization (history, literature, or thought) in consultation with faculty and graduate advisors and pursue advanced work in that area while also completing an interdisciplinary foundation in all three areas of the program. All degrees require the completion of comprehensive exams or equivalent as defined below, while doctoral degrees also require the completion of a substantial scholarly manuscript in the candidate's field of study.

JTS is unique in offering two doctoral degree options within Modern Jewish Studies, the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) and the Doctor of Hebrew Literature (DHL). The Ph.D. program is oriented towards the production of substantial original research in the field of Modern Jewish Studies, while the DHL supports those who wish to pursue more synthetic monographs.

Graduate Learning Outcomes

The graduate program builds on all learning outcomes from the undergraduate program, incorporating greater content and methodological mastery into each area. Additionally, graduate students will be able to...

1. Contextualize primary and secondary sources within their appropriate literary, historical, and ideological currents
2. Articulate critical issues and debates within the contemporary field of Modern Jewish Studies
3. Apply the methods of their field of study to produce advanced critical analysis of a theme, source, text, or material related to the modern Jewish experience

Master of Arts Degree Requirements

The MA degree in Modern Jewish Studies is designed to take one to two years to complete. Students may be eligible for advanced standing or other degree completion timelines in consultation with the advisor.

The master's degree requires 30 total credits that are distributed as outlined below. Students must also demonstrate Hebrew proficiency equivalent to the level of HEB 5203 (Intermediate Hebrew II),

though any courses that a student takes to achieve this proficiency are not counted towards the overall degree.

MA Core Courses (6 credits)

- MDS 5102: Classics of the Jewish Tradition (3 credits)
- HIS 5406: Modern Jewish History (3 credits)

MA Distribution Requirements (24 credits)

- Two courses (6 credits) in Modern Jewish History
- Two courses (6 credits) in Modern Jewish Literature
- Two courses (6 credits) in Modern Jewish Thought
- Two additional elective courses (6 credits) in an area related to Modern Jewish Studies

Thesis, Capstone Project, or Examination Requirement

Students must complete either a thesis or written comprehensive examination to be awarded the MA degree. Students work closely with their advisor to determine which approach best suits their academic goals, then students prepare the thesis or exams during their final year in the program.

MA theses are sustained research papers in an area of the student's choosing and specialization. Students wishing to write an MA thesis should work closely with their advisor early in the program to identify a topic and to shape their course of study to prepare them to write the thesis. Prior to beginning the thesis, students propose their topic, research plan, and identify their primary reader for approval by the Committee on Modern Jewish Studies

The content, nature, and requirements of capstone projects are determined in consultation with the advisor.

Comprehensive examinations test students' understanding of a list of required readings and their ability to place the readings in the broader contexts of Modern Jewish Studies and the material covered in their coursework.

Doctor of Hebrew Literature in Modern Jewish Studies Degree Requirements

The DHL in Modern Jewish Studies is designed for students who wish to pursue advanced academic work in Modern Jewish Studies but do not wish to pursue a traditional academic career. It offers more flexibility to students than the other degree programs and can be completed on a full-time or part-time basis.

Languages

DHL students must demonstrate satisfactory reading comprehension of Hebrew prior to matriculation, either through prior coursework or completion of the JTS Hebrew Placement Exam.

Courses

30 graduate credits beyond the MA are required, as follows:

- Five courses (15 credits) in the major discipline (Modern Jewish History, Modern Jewish Literature, Modern Jewish Thought)
- Two courses (6 credits) in the nonmajor discipline (Modern Jewish History, Modern Jewish Literature, Modern Jewish Thought)
- One course (3 credits) in a Medieval and Early Modern Jewish Studies
- Two courses (6 credits) of electives

Comprehensive Examination

Upon satisfactory completion of all course work, students must take a comprehensive examination (with both a written and an oral component), which tests their understanding of a list of required readings and their ability to place the readings in the broader contexts covered in course work.

Dissertation

An original monograph-length dissertation on a topic in Modern Jewish Studies, to be approved by the advisor and a second reader. The DHL dissertation is generally a critical, synthetic project.

Doctor of Philosophy Degree Requirements

The PhD program in Modern Jewish Studies is designed to be completed in five to seven years. Students admitted to the program without a prior MA degree may be considered for matriculation into the MA first with continuation (pending satisfactory academic performance) into the PhD.

Students in the PhD must pursue the degree on a full-time basis. Residency at JTS is required through the coursework years and strongly encouraged throughout the dissertation writing process, as students benefit from access to the vibrant intellectual life of the Seminary and the resources of the JTS Library. PhD students and candidates may also be eligible to assist in or teach JTS courses as part of their professional training and funding package.

Languages

PhD students must demonstrate satisfactory reading comprehension of Hebrew prior to matriculation, either through prior coursework or completion of the JTS Hebrew Placement Exam. Students must also demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of German and either French or Yiddish prior to taking the comprehensive exams. Additional languages may be required, depending upon research needs.

Coursework at other institutions participating in a consortium with the Kekst Graduate School may be required to advance students' language skills.

Courses

30 credits beyond the MA are required, as follows:

- Five courses (15 credits) in the major discipline (Modern Jewish History, Modern Jewish Thought, or Modern Jewish Literature)
- Two courses (6 credits) in the nonmajor discipline (Modern Jewish History, Modern Jewish Thought, or Modern Jewish Literature)
- One course (3 credits) in Medieval and Early Modern Jewish Studies
- Two courses (6 credits) of electives

Comprehensive Examinations

Upon satisfactory completion of all course work, students will take a written and an oral examination. The written exam consists of four essays, one from each field (i.e., one from each examiner). The student will select one out of two questions submitted by each examiner. The student will have a two-day period to complete the essays. The oral exam focuses on the written answers and explores other topics as well, such as the essays not chosen by the student.

Following satisfactory completion of the comprehensive examinations, students progress to candidacy.

The Dissertation

All PhD candidates produce an original monograph-length dissertation on a topic in Modern Jewish Studies that demonstrates the ability to pursue original research in their area of specialization, to be approved by a faculty committee.

Jewish Literature

BA Advisor: Dr. Brian Smollett

The undergraduate program in Jewish Literature, housed within the Modern Jewish Studies area, encompasses the entirety of Jewish literary production from ancient to modern times. Courses examine the literary expressions of Jewish history, culture, religion, and philosophy. Students engage with critical analysis, gain fluency in relevant languages like Hebrew and Yiddish, and explore the evolving themes and genres that have shaped Jewish identity.

Learning Outcomes

Upon graduation, students should be able to...

1. Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of major works, genres, and periods in Jewish literature, from the Hebrew Bible to contemporary times.
2. Analyze literary texts using close reading techniques, identifying literary devices, and interpreting the significance of form and content.
3. Situate Jewish literature within its historical, cultural, and religious contexts, understanding the interplay between text and society.
4. Use proficiency in Hebrew and/or Yiddish to read and analyze Jewish literature in its original languages
5. Articulate complex ideas clearly and concisely, both in written and oral presentations, using appropriate academic language.
6. Conduct independent research and analysis using primary and secondary sources, formulate research questions, and develop strong arguments.

Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements

In consultation with the program advisor, students select a total of 10 courses (30 credits) to complete the major.

- Two courses (6 credits) in Hebrew and/or Yiddish language
- One course (3 credits) in Modern Jewish History
- One course (3 credits) in Medieval Jewish Literature or Liturgy
- Five courses (15 credits) in Jewish Literature, chosen in consultation with the advisor
- One course (3 credits) fulfilled through a senior thesis, senior seminar, or an upper-level elective chosen in consultation with the BA advisor

Jewish Thought

BA and MA Advisor: Dr. Eitan Fishbane

The program in Jewish Thought provides students with a comprehensive understanding of Jewish thought from its ancient roots to its contemporary expressions. Through coursework in Jewish philosophy, theology, intellectual history, ethics, and law, students will develop an appreciation for the intellectual heritage of Judaism, the relationship of Jewish Thought to its cultural and intellectual contexts, and its and its ongoing relevance in today's world.

Learning Outcomes

By graduation, students should be able to...

1. Analyze and evaluate major philosophical currents within Jewish thought, such as rationalism, mysticism, and existentialism.
2. Articulate different conceptions of God, creation, and human nature within Jewish thought and their implications for Jewish life and practice.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of how biblical and rabbinic sources relate to philosophical inquiry.
4. Engage with Jewish thinkers using contemporary critical methodologies.
5. Apply knowledge derived from Jewish intellectual history and philosophy to contemporary challenges and debates.

Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements

- One course (3 credits) of background in general philosophy or religion from another institution (e.g., Columbia University's PHILBC 1001: Introduction to Philosophy), chosen in consultation with the advisor
- One course (3 credits) in biblical or rabbinic literature
- Two courses (6 credits) in medieval Jewish thought (philosophy or mysticism)
- One course (3 credits) in contemporary Jewish thought
- One course (3 credits) in Jewish ethics, or social or political thought
- Three courses (9 credits) of electives, chosen in consultation with the advisor
- One course (3 credits) fulfilled through a senior thesis, senior seminar, or an upper-level elective chosen in consultation with the BA advisor

Master of Arts Admission Requirements

An undergraduate degree in Philosophy, Religion, or Jewish Studies is beneficial but is not required.

Master of Arts Degree Requirements

Courses

In addition to courses required of all students in Gershon Kekst Graduate School, 30 graduate credits are required, as follows:

- One course (3 credits) MDS 5102: Classics of the Jewish Tradition
- Two courses (6 credits) in premodern Jewish thought
- One course (3 credits) in modern Jewish thought
- One course (3 credits) in Jewish mysticism (Kabbalah and Hasidism)
- One course (3 credits) in philosophy or religious studies through the consortium
- One course (3 credits) in Jewish ethics or social or political thought
- Three electives (9 credits) chosen in consultation with advisor

Thesis or Comprehensive Exams

To qualify for the Master of Arts degree, the student will either write a thesis on a figure, theme, or topic in the history of Jewish thought or take comprehensive exams. The thesis will demonstrate scholarly competence in the chosen field, as well as original insight into the subject; the exams will show scholarly competence in the chosen field based on fluency with a comprehensive reading list created by the student and the advisor.

Jewish Ethics

BA and MA Advisor: Dr. Shira Billet

The program in Jewish Ethics provides students with a fundamental toolbox for understanding Jewish ethical thought and its application to contemporary issues. Through rigorous coursework in Jewish philosophy, law, and social thought, students will hone their critical thinking and advanced writing skills while applying Jewish ethical principles to historic and contemporary topics.

Learning Outcomes

By graduation, students should be able to...

1. Articulate and apply different ethical frameworks within Jewish thought, such as deontological, feminist, and virtue ethics.
2. Contextualize Jewish ethics within the broader framework of Jewish thought
3. Analyze and discuss contemporary ethical issues through a Jewish lens, including topics such as social justice, environmental ethics, bioethics, and economic justice.
4. Understand the relationship between Jewish law (halakha) and ethics, and how ethical considerations can inform legal decisions.
5. Explore the intersection of Jewish ethics and social thought, including topics such as Jewish communal values, social responsibility, and Jewish political life.

Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements

30 credits distributed as follow:

- 3 credits (1 course) in foundations of Jewish Ethics
- 6 credits (2 courses) in Ethics & Jewish Philosophy/Thought
- 6 credits (2 courses) in Jewish texts in the field of Ethics (Bible, Talmud, Midrash, etc.)
- 9 credits (3 courses) in Ethics electives
- 3 credits (1 course) in general/secular ethical theory, philosophical ethics, practical ethics, introduction to ethics, or religious ethics taken at Columbia University or Barnard College
- 3 credits (1 course) senior seminar, thesis, or an upper-level Ethics course

Master of Arts Admission Requirements

An undergraduate degree with a major in Jewish Studies, Religious Studies, Ethics, or its equivalent is beneficial but not required.

Master of Arts Degree Requirements

Courses

In addition to prerequisite courses, students are required to complete 30 graduate credits as follows:

- One course (3 credits) MDS 5102: Classics of the Jewish Tradition
- Ethics in Jewish Tradition and Community: a theory-based course on the history and methods of Jewish ethics (3 credits)
- Moral Theories: a theory-based course surveying ethics and/or moral philosophy, (3 credits)
- Two electives in Jewish ethical theory chosen from the following (6 credits):
 - Narrative Ethics: including but not limited to midrash, Aggadah, and biblical literature
 - Philosophical Ethics: considering the philosophical elements of Jewish ethics
 - Halakhah and Ethics: addressing the role of halakhah in Jewish ethics
 - Feminist Jewish Ethics: engaging feminist theory, feminist ethics, and gender studies
 - Comparative Religious Ethics: comparing Jewish ethics with Christian, Muslim, and other religious ethics
- Three electives in applied Jewish ethics from the fields below (9 credits):
 - Bioethics
 - Legal ethics
 - Environmental ethics
 - Business ethics
- Two Jewish Studies electives, chosen in consultation with an advisor (6 credits)

Master's Degree Program Capstone

Depending on their career trajectory, students may choose, in consultation with the M.A. advisor, a master's thesis, capstone, or experiential learning experience fulfilled through an internship with a partner organization.

Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures

Area Coordinator: Dr. Marjorie Lehman

BA Advisor: Dr. Sarah Wolf

MA Advisor: Dr. Jonathan Milgram

Doctoral Advisor: Dr. Richard Kalmin

The area of Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures (RLC) offers one of the most comprehensive programs in rabbinics in North America. We train undergraduate, rabbinical, cantorial, and graduate students in how to decode and critically analyze rabbinic sources using both philological methodologies and contemporary theories of analysis. Students consider the historical, social, and religious contexts that influenced the development of these sources and uncover contemporary meaning and explore their present-day impact. Our programs are designed to prepare students to be critical thinkers, engaged in the serious study of texts and the evaluation of sources and meaning-making practices. Graduates are well-prepared for academic careers, as well as careers in the rabbinate and cantorate, and Jewish education. RLC students are also often life-long learners who are active in or retired from careers in the Jewish communal world or other areas. The area's internationally renowned faculty includes specialists in Talmud and rabbinics, midrash, ancient Judaism, the development of halakhah, manuscript and book history, paleography, and pedagogy.

RLC offers an undergraduate major, a master's program, and two doctoral programs, the PhD and DHL degrees. RLC courses are also part of the core curriculum in most JTS programs and schools, and RLC faculty serve as mentors and instructors for students enrolled across our various schools and programs.

Core Faculty

- Richard Kalmin, Theodore R. Racoosin Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics
- David Kraemer, Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics; Joseph J. and Dora Abbell Librarian
- Marjorie Lehman, Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics
- Jonathan Milgram, Associate Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics
- Marcus Mordecai Schwartz, Assistant Professor, Talmud and Rabbinics; Ripps Schnitzer Librarian for Special Collections
- Sarah Wolf, Assistant Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics
- Yitz Landes, Assistant Professor of Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures

Associated Instructors

- Burton L. Visotzky, Nathan and Janet Appleman Emeritus Professor of Midrash and Interreligious Studies; Louis Stein Director of the Finkelstein Institute for Religious and Social Studies; Director of the Milstein Center for Interreligious Dialogue
- Luciana Pajecki Lederman, Director of the JTS Beit Midrash; Adjunct Instructor of Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures; Director of Nishma
- Eva Kiesele, Visiting Assistant Professor of Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures

- Benjamin Kamine, Adjunct Instructor of Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures; Assistant Director of the Milstein Center for Interreligious Dialogue
- Aaron Koller, Adjunct Professor of Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures
- Ronald Androphy, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics

Bachelor of Arts

Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

1. **Reading and Interpretation:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in reading and interpreting primary rabbinic texts, including the Mishnah, the Talmud Bavli and Yerushalmi, and collections of Midrash. This includes the ability to:
 - 1.1. Deconstruct the structure of rabbinic passages.
 - 1.2. Analyze the logic and argumentation employed in Talmudic discourse, recognizing and explaining different rabbinic methods of interpretation.
 - 1.3. Identify and explain key rabbinic terms and concepts.
2. **Critical Analysis:** Students will develop critical thinking skills in analyzing rabbinic texts. This includes the ability to:
 - 2.1. Identify and analyze competing interpretations within the Talmudim and other rabbinic sources
 - 2.2. Identify and analyze later rabbinic commentaries.
 - 2.3. Formulate and defend well-reasoned arguments based on evidence from the Talmudic text.
3. **Historical Knowledge:** Students will acquire a comprehensive understanding of the historical worlds of the rabbis, including the Second Temple period, the rise of Rabbinic Judaism, and the social, political, and economic realities that shaped rabbinic thought.
4. **Socio-Historical Contextualization:** Students will be able to critically analyze rabbinic texts in their historical context. This includes the ability to:
 - 4.1. Explain how social, political, and economic factors influenced the development of rabbinic law and thought.
 - 4.2. Identify and analyze the ways in which rabbinic texts reflect or challenge their broader social/historical context.
5. **Hebrew and Aramaic Fluency:** Students will develop strong reading and comprehension skills in Hebrew and Aramaic, the primary languages of rabbinic literature. This includes the ability to:
 - 5.1. With advanced preparation, read and translate unvocalized Hebrew and Aramaic texts with fluency.
 - 5.2. Utilize grammatical knowledge to analyze the meaning and nuances of rabbinic language.
 - 5.3. Use Hebrew and Aramaic dictionaries, lexicons, and digital tools for research purposes.

BA Major in RLC Course Requirements

Thirty credits (10 courses), including two RLC courses applied from the List College core, chosen in consultation with the BA advisor, distributed as follows:

- Four courses (12 credits) in Talmud, which generally include some combination of the following courses: Talmud Text I, Talmud Text II, Intermediate Talmud and Advanced Talmud (as determined by the BA advisor)
- One course (3 credits) Introduction to Rabbinic Narrative (RLC 5022)
- One course (3 credits) Mishnah, Tosefta, and Tannaitic Literature (RLC 3323)
- One course (3 credits) in Ancient Judaism
- Two courses (6 credits) electives in Talmud, Aramaic, Midrash, Rishonim, or Codes (must not be in translation)
- One course (3 credits) fulfilled through a Senior Thesis, Senior Seminar, or an upper level RLC elective chosen in consultation with the major advisor

Master of Arts in Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures

The MA program in Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures is interdisciplinary and designed to enable students to develop strong textual skills while exploring the history and culture of the Jews of antiquity (6th century BCE to 6th century CE). It has three components:

1. gaining competence in reading and interpreting rabbinic texts,
2. studying the political and social history of the Jews of antiquity and the political and social history of the empires that ruled them (Persian, Greek, Roman, Parthian, Sassanian, and early Byzantine),
3. studying the intellectual and religious history of ancient Judaism and the other religious and intellectual traditions of late antiquity (Persia, Egypt, Hellenistic and Roman empires, Christianity, gnosticism, philosophy, magic, and law).

Students will be able to concentrate in any one of the following areas: Judaism in Late Antiquity, Midrash, Talmud, or Halakhah and as such will determine with their advisors the most appropriate combination of courses in Bible, history, and rabbinics.

MA Learning Outcomes

1. **Independent Textual Analysis:** Students will demonstrate advanced proficiency in independently analyzing the rabbinic texts representing their area of specialization. This includes the ability to:
 - 1.1. Fluently navigate and analyze the structure rabbinic passages, including identifying subtle nuances within the text.
 - 1.2. Analyze the development of legal and philosophical arguments across different layers of rabbinic sources
 - 1.3. Critically evaluate and apply advanced rabbinic methods of interpretation to complex legal, philosophical, and contemporary issues.
2. **Specialized Historical Knowledge:** Students will acquire a deeper understanding of specialized historical topics in their field of interest. This could include specialization in specific periods (e.g., Second Temple period, Late Antiquity), geographical regions (e.g., Babylonian Jewry, Palestinian Jewry), or specific social or cultural aspects (e.g., family law, economic practices).

3. **Advanced Contextualization:** Students will demonstrate an advanced ability to critically contextualize rabbinic texts within their historical framework. This includes the ability to:
 - 3.1. Analyze how specific social, political, and economic factors influenced the development of rabbinic thought.
 - 3.2. Describe relationships between Ancient Judaism and other religious and intellectual traditions in Late Antiquity
 - 3.3. Critically evaluate the relationship between rabbinic texts and other primary and secondary historical sources.
 - 3.4. Analyze the interplay between internal rabbinic debates and their broader historical context, recognizing the evolution of rabbinic thought over time.
4. **Advanced Hebrew and Aramaic:** Students will demonstrate advanced proficiency in reading, analyzing, and translating complex Hebrew and Aramaic texts. This includes the ability to:
 - 4.1. Sight-read unvocalized Hebrew and Aramaic texts with fluency and accuracy.
 - 4.2. Utilize advanced grammatical and lexical knowledge to analyze the nuances of rabbinic language and identify subtle variations in meaning.
 - 4.3. Consult and critically evaluate advanced Hebrew and Aramaic lexicons, digital tools, and scholarly resources for research purposes.
5. **Research Skills:** Students will develop advanced research and argumentation skills. This includes the ability to:
 - 5.1. Formulate original research topics for future academic work
 - 5.2. Analyze primary and secondary sources relevant to their research interests.
 - 5.3. Construct and present well-reasoned arguments supported by in-depth analysis of Talmudic and other rabbinic texts.

MA Admission Requirements

Potential graduate candidates are advised that advanced study of rabbinic texts requires extensive preparation in related fields, including Bible, Aramaic, history and religion of Judaism in antiquity, and history and religion of the Greco-Roman and Iranian world. Accordingly, students seeking admission to the graduate programs in this department are encouraged to prepare themselves, to the extent possible, with university courses in these areas.

MA Degree Requirements:

Prerequisites

Facility with rabbinic texts in Hebrew and Aramaic is required for entrance. HEB 5203 and the equivalent to RLC 5453: Babylonian Aramaic.

Courses

The MA degree requires 30 credits not including any courses toward achieving required language competencies. Credits are distributed as follows:

- 3 credits (1 course) MDS 5102: Classics of the Jewish Tradition or the equivalent

- 21 credits (7 courses) in a combination of Biblical Exegesis, Ancient Jewish History, Midrash, Talmud, or Halakhah—courses must be taken at the 5000 level or above.
- 3 credits (1 course) HIS 5117: Jews and Judaism in the Ancient World or equivalent
- 3 credits (1 course) in religions of the late antique world
- 3 credits (1 course) elective in related fields at the 5000 level or above

Courses are to be chosen in consultation with the student's MA advisor and must be approved before registration each semester.

For Rabbinical School students: courses taken in Israel at Schechter/Schocken for credit can count toward the MA. While these are considered JTS courses, students in Israel must complete assessments parallel to those they would complete at JTS in order to receive credit. Such courses must also be approved by the MA advisor. For courses taken at Hebrew University, transfer credit can be awarded. No more than 9 credits total can be transferred from other institutions.

Comprehensive Exams

Students elect to take MA exams in **one** of the following four concentrations:

- Judaism in Late Antiquity
- Midrash
- Talmud and Rabbinics
- Halakhah

Each concentration has its own primary and secondary source reading lists available on Canvas.

In consultation with the MA advisor students should discuss their plan for scheduling their exams. All exams must be completed by April 15th of the final semester of the degree. The primary source component of the exam is administered orally and thus requires proficiency in Hebrew and Aramaic.

For the secondary source component, students will answer four larger questions that will examine their understanding of the methodologies presented in the secondary source material. At least one question will be rooted in primary source material and will ask that students explain how secondary source material aided them in analyzing these sources.

Language Requirements

By the point of completion of the MA, students must show competency in Aramaic and Hebrew when they take their required comprehensive oral examinations. There is no separate language exam required. Greek is also recommended but not required. Credits in language courses taken will not count toward the 30 credits required for the degree.

Doctor of Hebrew Literature

The DHL program offers a more generalist scope of study for aspiring scholars of rabbinic literatures. It can be completed on a part-time, low-residency basis and is ideally suited to those with significant

academic and/or professional background in rabbinics who wish to obtain advanced knowledge and skills, most especially rabbis and educators.

Like the MA program, the DHL is interdisciplinary and designed to enable students to develop strong textual skills while exploring the history and culture of the Jews of antiquity (6th century BCE to 6th century CE).

Students choose to concentrate in any one of the following areas: Judaism in Late Antiquity, Midrash, Talmud, or Halakhah and as such will determine with their advisors the most appropriate combination of courses in Bible, history, and rabbinics.

DHL Learning Outcomes

By graduation, students will have mastered the BA and MA outcomes and will also have developed advanced skills in research and critical analysis.

1. **Comparative Analysis and Intertextuality:** Students will demonstrate a sophisticated level of analysis that integrates comparative methodologies and intertextual awareness. This includes the ability to:
 - 1.1. Analyze rabbinic sources in conversation with other primary sources from the rabbinic period, including non-Talmudic legal collections, Midrashic literature, and non-rabbinic Jewish texts.
 - 1.2. Employ comparative approaches to analyze the development of legal and philosophical concepts across different rabbinic schools of thought and geographical regions.
 - 1.3. Identify and analyze intertextual references within the Talmud, demonstrating awareness of the broader literary and intellectual context.
 - 1.4. Critically evaluate the relationship between rabbinic texts and other primary and secondary historical sources.
2. **Research Skills:** Students will develop advanced research and argumentation skills. This includes the ability to:
 - 2.1. Formulate and defend original research topics related to the Talmud and related rabbinic literature.
 - 2.2. Analyze primary and secondary sources relevant to their research.
 - 2.3. Construct and present well-reasoned arguments supported by in-depth analysis of primary and secondary sources.
3. **Contribution to the Field:** Students will develop an understanding of the broader trends and currents in modern scholarship on rabbinic literatures and cultures. This includes the ability to:
 - 3.1. Compile literature reviews for specific research topics
 - 3.2. Synthesize existing scholarship into original critical contributions to the field of rabbinic studies.

DHL Admission Requirements

Students specializing in Talmudic literature must demonstrate facility with rabbinic literatures and cultures, including proficiency in Hebrew and Aramaic.

Additionally, students must have an undergraduate degree in the humanities or social sciences from an accredited college or university and a master's degree in Talmud and Rabbinics or the equivalent.

Doctor of Hebrew Literature Degree Requirements

Prerequisites

Students must hold an MA degree in rabbinic literature or the equivalent (i.e. rabbinic ordination) to begin the DHL degree.

Courses

In addition to courses required of all students in Gershon Kekst Graduate School, 30 graduate credits beyond the MA are required as follows:

- Seven courses (21 credits) in the field of specialization
- Three courses (9 credits) in a related field

All courses must be chosen in consultation with the advisor.

Languages

Students must demonstrate proficiency in Hebrew and Aramaic by the time of graduation. Proficiency is demonstrated through the successful completion of comprehensive examinations. Credits from language courses taken will not count toward the 30 credits required for the degree.

Comprehensive Examination

Upon satisfactory completion of all course work, students must pass a series of examinations on predetermined selections of rabbinic texts and secondary literature.

Dissertation

Students must complete competent research that constitutes a contribution to the field. This may be a single monograph or a series of three scholarly research papers.

Doctor of Philosophy

Like the MA program, the PhD is interdisciplinary and designed to enable students to develop strong textual skills while exploring the history and culture of the Jews of antiquity (6th century BCE to 6th century CE).

Students choose to concentrate in any one of the following areas: Judaism in Late Antiquity, Midrash, Talmud, or Halakhah and as such will determine with their advisors the most appropriate combination of courses in Bible, history, and rabbinics.

PhD Learning Outcomes

By graduation, students will have mastered the BA and MA outcomes and will also have developed advanced skills in research and critical analysis.

1. **Original Textual Analysis:** Students will demonstrate exceptional expertise in independently analyzing the most challenging passages from the Bavli and Yerushalmi. This includes the ability to:
 - 1.1. Fluently navigate and analyze intricate structures and nuances within Talmudic discourse, identifying subtle variations in meaning and potential textual ambiguities.
 - 1.2. Masterfully apply and critically evaluate advanced rabbinic methods of interpretation (middot) to address complex legal, philosophical, and theological issues.
 - 1.3. Trace the development of legal and philosophical arguments across various strata of the Talmud (Mishnah, Gemara, and across other rabbinic collections and commentaries) and identify potential historical and redactional influences.
2. **Advanced Research and Contribution to Knowledge:** Students will develop expertise in conducting original research and making significant contributions to Rabbinic Studies. This includes the ability to:
 - 2.1. Formulate and defend innovative research questions related to the Talmud and related rabbinic literature, demonstrating a deep understanding of existing scholarship.
 - 2.2. Utilize advanced research methodologies to critically analyze primary and secondary sources, including unpublished manuscripts and lesser-known commentaries.
 - 2.3. Produce original and well-supported arguments that advance scholarly understanding of the rabbinic literature and its historical context.
3. **Comparative Analysis and Intertextuality:** Students will demonstrate a sophisticated level of analysis that integrates comparative methodologies and intertextual awareness. This includes the ability to:
 - 3.1. Analyze rabbinic sources in conversation with other primary sources from the rabbinic period, including non-Talmudic legal collections, Midrashic literature, and non-rabbinic Jewish texts.
 - 3.2. Employ comparative approaches to analyze the development of legal and philosophical concepts across different rabbinic schools of thought and geographical regions.
 - 3.3. Identify and analyze intertextual references within the Talmud, demonstrating awareness of the broader literary and intellectual context.
 - 3.4. Critically evaluate the relationship between rabbinic texts and other primary and secondary historical sources.

Doctor of Philosophy Admission Requirements

Students must have an undergraduate degree in the humanities or social sciences from an accredited college or university and a master's degree in Talmud and Rabbinics or the equivalent.

Doctor of Philosophy Degree Requirements

Languages

In addition to languages required of all students in Gershon Kekst Graduate School, students must demonstrate knowledge of either Latin, Greek, or Syriac, or such other ancient languages as a specialization requires, as determined by the advisor.

Courses

In addition to courses required of all students in Gershon Kekst Graduate School, 30 graduate credits beyond the MA are required as follows:

- 7 courses (21 credits) in the field of specialization taken at or above the 5000-level
 - 5000-level courses taken to fulfill this requirement must include doctoral-level research work to be determined in consultation with the instructor and the advisor
- 3 courses (9 credits) in a related field

All courses are to be chosen in consultation with the advisor.

Comprehensive Examination

Upon satisfactory completion of all course work and prior to beginning dissertation research, all candidates must pass a series of examinations on a predetermined quantity of rabbinic texts. Candidates will be examined orally on a reading list of critical scholarly literature to be compiled in consultation with the prospective thesis advisor.

Dissertation

Each student must complete an original piece of research that advances knowledge in the field of specialization. Upon completion of the doctoral dissertation, the candidate will defend the dissertation before a committee composed of appointed internal and external faculty readers, following the procedures of the Kekst Graduate School.

Texts and Interpretations (BA)

BA Advisor: Dr. Amy Kalmanofsky

Bachelor of Arts

The Jewish Texts and Interpretations major allows students to develop skills for reading, comprehending, and interpreting texts across disciplines, genres, and historical periods.

The goal of the major is to train students to become skilled readers of significant Jewish texts. In their course of study, students will acquire language proficiency, develop a context for intertextual allusions, consider what constitutes a “Jewish” text and the idea of a canon, and develop a critical methods toolbox of reading.

Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

Upon graduation, students will be able to...

1. Locate central Jewish texts in their historical contexts
2. Read and comprehend classical Jewish sources in their original languages
3. Identify themes such legal, ethical, or philosophical principles across Jewish sources
4. Characterize different modes and forms of Jewish exegesis
5. Apply critical methodologies like literary analysis, feminist analysis, and source criticism to the analysis of ancient and modern Jewish primary sources

BA Major Course Requirements

Completion of the major follows the credit load and course requirements for all List College students. Additionally, to fulfill the Texts and Interpretations major, students will take nine text courses approved by the major advisor. Five of the nine courses must focus on primary texts in their original language. At least five courses must be in Bible or Rabbinics above the 1000 level. All text courses will foreground primary sources and apply interpretive methodologies. Students will also take a seminar in methods and theories of critical reading.

Division of Academic Jewish Studies Policies

List College

Students in List College are subject to all JTS institutional policies, as well as those mandated by their joint program institution. Policies specific to the undergraduate program can be found below.

Major Declaration

By November 1st of the junior year, students must declare a major field. The choice of major must be approved by the academic-area undergraduate advisor. Students declare their major by filling out a major declaration form, available in the List College Office, and meeting with and obtaining the signature of the major advisor. The form is then returned to the List College Office. All List College majors consist of 30 credits. A total of 24 of the 30 required credits must be taken at List College; 6 of these may be double-counted to fulfill a List College core requirement. No more than 6 credits will be counted as transfer credit toward the major from outside of JTS. In the senior year, 3 of the 30 required credits may be fulfilled by a senior seminar, thesis, independent study*, or an additional elective selected in consultation with the major advisor. Students may major in Bible, Jewish History, Jewish Literature, Jewish Texts and Interpretations, Jewish Gender & Women's Studies, Jewish Thought, Jewish Ethics, Modern Jewish Studies, Medieval and Early Modern Jewish Studies, or Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures. Each area or program determines the specific distribution of courses and requirements for majors. An initial declaration of major may, with approval, be modified at any time up to the fall semester of the senior year.

*Students may petition the Dean's Office to take 3 of the 30 required major credits as a directed independent study only during the spring of their senior year. This independent study is in lieu of senior seminar or a thesis.

Completion of BA Requirements

Most students complete their joint program BA degrees in four years. The dean and academic advisors regularly review student files to ascertain that appropriate progress is being made toward the completion of degree requirements.

Students are considered full-time when taking a minimum of 12 credits in the Joint Program or Double Degree Program. The total number of credits for which a student is registered at both schools is considered.

However, since the bachelor's degree requires the completion of 144-146 credits depending on where a student is dually enrolled, students must complete a minimum of 31 credits each academic year for

their progress to be considered satisfactory and to continue to receive Federal Title IV student assistance (Pell Grant and Direct Loans).

Students must take at least 54 of the 82 Jewish Studies credits in residence at the New York City campus of JTS. Students in the Joint Program need to take 64 credits in residence at Columbia. Students in the Double Degree Program need to take 62 credits in residence at Barnard.

Matriculated students must continue to register each semester until they have completed all requirements for the degree. Part-time matriculated students must register for at least 3 credits per semester.

Students who have finished their work at JTS but have not finished their 60 liberal arts credits must register for continuous registration each semester until they complete this course work.

Students may take no more than six classes in a given semester. If a student wishes to take a seventh class, they must submit a petition to their academic advisors at Columbia/Barnard and JTS before the semester begins.

Students in the Joint Program will not be allowed to graduate from either Columbia or JTS until they have completed all requirements for both degrees.

List College Dean's List

A student registered for 9 or more letter-graded credits who attains a grade point average of 3.5 or higher shall be on the Dean's List of academic excellence. Students who receive an Incomplete are not eligible for the Dean's List until after the grade is recorded.

List College Senior Thesis

A limited number of students may be eligible to graduate from List College with honors by writing an honors thesis during their senior year. Students who have earned a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.7 may submit an application during the winter of their junior year to write an honors thesis. The List College dean and the coordinator of the thesis program, in consultation with faculty in the student's major area will determine whether an applicant will be invited to pursue a thesis. Decisions are reached not only on the basis of a student's academic record, but also take into account faculty availability, the feasibility of the proposed topic, and the student's overall course load. The thesis must be a substantial research paper developed in close consultation with a thesis advisor, who will be selected from the faculty of the student's major field of study.

Those students who accept the invitation to pursue an honors thesis are required to participate in the yearlong supervised Thesis Writing Seminar, led by the senior thesis coordinator. This thesis seminar is taken in lieu of the senior seminar. Students receive a total of 6 credits for completing the senior thesis. They will fulfill 3 (of the required 30) credits in their given major and an additional 3 credits to be used towards their core or elective requirements by successfully completing both seminar and thesis. Students will receive traditional letter grades for both courses.

List College Academic Honors

Students who have demonstrated academic excellence throughout their years at List College are eligible to graduate with academic honors. Students with a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 will graduate *cum laude*; those with a 3.67 will graduate *magna cum laude*; and those with a 3.9 will graduate *summa cum laude*. These academic honors will be noted on the List College diploma and on the student's transcript.

Summer Study

Many students choose to take courses during the summer to earn credits toward core and major requirements. All course choices must receive the approval of the dean or academic advisor. List College students are permitted a maximum of 15 total credits at JTS, Columbia, and/or Barnard in any one summer.

Summer study for List College students is offered over three separate sessions. Summer Session I, often called “minimester,” offers intensive study, typically focused on biblical and rabbinic topics. Enrollment is determined by the List College dean's office, and students who have just completed their senior year are not eligible for enrollment in Summer Session I. No single area of the List College core may be fulfilled through minimester classes and no more than two minimester courses may be applied to the List College BA degree. Please note, Columbia and Barnard do NOT accept minimester courses for transfer credit.

Study Abroad

List College students in good academic standing, with no incomplete work from a prior semester, may spend one or both semesters of their junior year abroad. Semester study abroad at accredited universities around the world is encouraged. Programs must be approved by the deans and area/departmental advisors of both List College and Columbia University or Barnard College. Students must also register and pay the appropriate fee at JTS for each semester abroad. Credit will be determined upon receipt of an official transcript from the foreign university. No more than 6 transfer credits will be counted toward the major.

Joint Program with Columbia University

Students in the Joint Program earn two bachelor's degrees—one from List College and another from the School of General Studies of Columbia University.

Established in 1953, the Joint Program enables qualified students to follow a simultaneous dual-degree program, with two majors and a coordinated program of study. Students earn the BA degree at Columbia by taking at least 64 credits in residence there and applying 60 credits earned at List College toward the Columbia requirement of 124 credits. Up to 15 elective credits in the List College program may be taken at Columbia. The liberal arts requirement for the List College BA degree is fulfilled by 60 credits taken at Columbia. Students are usually able to complete both degrees within

four years. Students may choose from any one of more than 50 majors offered at Columbia University.

For detailed information regarding major fields, individual courses, credits, privileges, calendars, and general regulations governing students, consult the area requirements under Courses of Instruction, and the bulletin of Columbia University's School of General Studies, which may be accessed on the [Columbia University website](#).

Programs with Barnard College

Barnard College and JTS adopted an inter-institutional agreement in 1979 by which matriculated students in each school are eligible to take courses in one of several ways.

1. Through the [Double Degree](#) program:
 - Students apply to both institutions for a coordinated program of study, which leads to a BA from Barnard and a BA from List College.
 - Students electing the Double Degree option take a minimum of 62 credits at Barnard, which also fulfills the liberal arts requirement for the List College BA degree.
 - Credits earned in List College courses are applied toward the Barnard requirement of 122 credits for the BA. Students are usually able to complete both degrees within four years.
 - Double Degree students are required to enroll full time (i.e., for 12 or more credits) at Barnard for at least three semesters. The full-time designation refers only to the number of credits; students are still expected to enroll in one or two List College courses during these semesters.
2. Barnard students may apply to spend their junior year at List College as visiting students, and List College women may apply to Barnard for a year of study as Other College Degree Candidates.

The Barnard College bulletin may be found on the [Barnard website](#).

Advising

Personalized advising is an important part of the List College academic experience. Each List College student is paired with an advisor in the dean's office who works closely with them, tracking their progress throughout their time in the program.

Your advisor will:

- Maintain your academic file.
- Give final approval for your JTS course registration each semester.
- Advise you on core requirements and placement.
- Approve courses taken at other universities.
- Help you declare your undergraduate major.

- Assist you in keeping track of your progress toward completing your requirements for graduation.

Contact your advisor to review the status of your personal tracking sheet and with any questions you may have about registration and degree completion.

Undergraduates are expected to declare a major by the end of their second year of full-time enrollment and no later than November 1st of their junior year. All undergraduates must declare and successfully complete the requirements of a specific major at JTS in order to be awarded the BA degree. To declare your major, contact your advisor.

Each of the Academic Areas also has an appointed undergraduate advisor who will provide mentorship and guidance in your area of specialization. Area advisors can guide you in the completion of major requirements, advise you on courses to take given your interests and goals, and guide you towards appropriate opportunities, fellowships, and careers in your major field of study.

Columbia/Barnard Advising

All Barnard Double Degree students will be assigned a pre-major advisor; once they select a major, their academic advisor will switch from their pre-major advisor to their major advisor: a faculty member in the department of each major. The Columbia School of General Studies Dean of Students Office is the primary advising resource for undergraduate students in the Joint Program. Students are matched with a dedicated advisor from matriculation to graduation and receive individually tailored advising to support their particular academic interests and professional goals. Advisors provide guidance and clarity on University and GS policies and procedures, and counsel students on their course selections each term, approving all courses counted toward fulfilling core requirements.

Pre-Professional Programs

While the majority of List College students choose our dual-degree programs with an eye toward ultimately choosing a career in the secular world, and alumni typically exercise leadership roles through a wide variety of careers and in volunteer capacities, a select number of prospective students become interested in careers of Jewish professional leadership. These include careers in the rabbinate, cantorate, Jewish education, academic Jewish studies, or Jewish communal service. For them, the Joint and Double Degree Programs afford the opportunity to gain accelerated admission toward an advanced degree in one of our graduate-level schools.

Acceptance to these pre-professional programs does not ensure admission to any of JTS's graduate-level schools, each of which requires the completion of the BA degree and retains its own admissions procedures and requirements.

Accelerated Ordination Track

List College students interested in the rabbinate can apply to the Accelerated Ordination Track (AOT) during their junior year. Students with a GPA of 3.5 or better are eligible to apply. Students

accepted to the AOT will be permitted to apply up to 15 credits of graduate-level course work to both the BA and the Rabbinical School curriculum. Each student should meet with the dean of each school to determine exactly what combination of elective and major credits toward the BA will also be accepted toward the Rabbinical School and what additional course work will be required.

Interested students should be in touch with the Rabbinical School Dean's Office and their List College academic advisor in the fall of their junior year to begin discussions on how to move forward.

BA/MA Option with Gershon Kekst Graduate School

A special BA/MA option has been developed in conjunction with the Gershon Kekst Graduate School. Students in List College who successfully maintain at least a 3.5 cumulative grade point average at List College and a 3.33 in the liberal arts courses required for the BA are eligible to apply for an accelerated MA degree.

List College students accepted to the Kekst Graduate School will be permitted to apply up to 9 credits of graduate-level Jewish Studies course work to both the BA at List College and the MA at Kekst. These 9 credits (3 courses) **must** be in the MA area of study. Students will also be permitted to apply additional graduate-level Jewish Studies credits, beyond those needed for the BA, toward the MA at Kekst. Only credits that are approved by the MA advisor may count toward the MA, and such credits are provisionally approved, pending admission to Kekst Graduate School.

List College students interested in the BA/MA program should first meet with their List College academic advisor. The academic advisor will then refer students to the appropriate MA advisor to review MA requirements and discuss course selection. Students then apply to the Kekst Graduate School during the fall semester of their final year at List College. The Kekst Graduate School maintains its own admissions procedures.

Details on the Gershon Kekst Graduate School application requirements and deadlines, as well as the online application, can be found [here](#).

BA/MA Option with William Davidson School of Education

A special BA/MA option has been developed in conjunction with the William Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education. Students in List College who successfully maintain at least a 3.5 cumulative grade point average at List College and a 3.33 in the liberal arts courses required for the BA are eligible to apply for an accelerated MA degree.

List College students accepted to the William Davidson School will be permitted to apply up to 12 credits of graduate-level course work to both the BA at List College and the MA at Davidson. These 12 credits (4 courses) **must** be in the MA area of study. Students will also be permitted to apply additional graduate-level credits, beyond the 82 credits required for the BA, toward the MA at Davidson. Only credits that are approved by the MA advisor may count toward the MA, and such credits are provisionally approved, pending admission to William Davidson School.

List College students interested in the BA/MA program should first meet with their List College academic advisor. The academic advisor will then refer students to the appropriate MA advisor to review MA requirements and discuss course selection. Students then apply to the William Davidson School during the fall semester of their final year at List College. The William Davidson School maintains its own admissions procedures, and admission is contingent upon completion of both BA degrees alongside the Admissions Committee's review. Details on the William Davidson School application requirements and deadlines, as well as the online application, can be found [here](#).

Kekst Graduate School

Students in The Kekst Graduate School are subject to all JTS institutional policies, as well as those mandated by their joint program institution. Policies specific to the graduate programs can be found below.

Completion of MA Degree Requirements

All work must be completed within six years of the date of admission to the program. The dean regularly reviews student files to ascertain that appropriate progress is being made toward the completion of degree requirements. Permission for an extension must be requested in writing and submitted to the dean.

Normally 12 credits or one-sixth of the student's total program credit requirements (whichever is greater) must be completed each year for a student to remain eligible for federal Title IV funds (student loans).

MA with Distinction

The MA degree with distinction offers an additional opportunity for students who wish to engage in serious research on the MA level and be recognized for their efforts on their transcripts and diplomas.

In addition to completing all degree requirements, a candidate for the degree of MA with distinction must:

- Maintain at least an A- average.
- Receive a "pass with distinction" on the comprehensive examination or thesis.
- Submit a suitable essay to the program advisor for approval. The essay may not be identical with one submitted for the satisfaction of a course requirement but may be identical with one submitted for consideration for a prize; it may be a revision of a paper submitted for a course requirement.

Students having neither a comprehensive examination nor a thesis should contact the program advisor for further information on how to fulfill these requirements. Graduation with distinction is noted on a student's transcript and diploma.

Completion of the PhD Degree Requirements

A candidate must complete all requirements for the PhD degree, including courses, demonstration of foreign language proficiency, comprehensive examination, and deposit of the dissertation, in no more than seven years from the date of formal admission to the PhD program. The dean regularly reviews student files to ascertain that appropriate progress is being made toward the completion of degree requirements. However, candidates engaged in the writing of the dissertation may apply in writing to the dean for an extension, which ordinarily cannot exceed two years.

To be considered making satisfactory academic progress in order to continue receiving federal Title IV funds (student loans), full-time students normally must complete all the course requirements within the first three years of the program or a minimum of one-third the required number of credits, depending on area of specialization and prerequisites needed. Students in the fourth and fifth years prepare for the comprehensive examination and begin research for the dissertation. The sixth and seventh years are devoted to completion of the dissertation, which must be defended by the second semester of the seventh year.

Completion of DHL Degree Requirements

All work for the DHL must be completed within 10 years of the date of admission to the program. The dean and faculty advisor annually review student files to ascertain that appropriate progress is being made toward the completion of degree requirements. A candidate engaged in the writing of the dissertation may apply in writing to the dean for an extension, which ordinarily cannot exceed two years.

To be considered making satisfactory academic progress in order to continue receiving federal Title IV funds (student loans), full-time students normally must complete all the course requirements within the first four years of the program or a minimum of one-third the required number of credits, depending on area of specialization and prerequisites needed. Students in the fifth and sixth years prepare for the comprehensive exam and begin research for their dissertation or papers. The remaining years are devoted to completion of the dissertation, which must be defended by the second semester of the seventh year.

PhD Residence Requirement

Two consecutive academic years of full-time residence are required of all students in the PhD program.

Full-time residence demands that advanced study be the student's principal responsibility. The student must be free to devote himself/herself primarily to study and research, schedule courses without limitations on hours, participate fully in the Kekst Graduate School's programs, and attend academic conferences. A student fulfilling full-time residence may accept outside employment only with permission of the dean.

MA Consortium

All matriculated MA students in Kekst Graduate School may take up to one course per semester at one of the MA consortium schools, which include the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Columbia University and Union Theological Seminary. Students should receive approval from their advisor to take a consortium course, and then contact the JTS Registrar to proceed with registration. Students are usually asked to also contact the instructor at the consortium institution to seek permission. The host institution reserves the right to give its own students priority enrollment.

PhD Consortium

Kekst Graduate School has a consortium agreement at the PhD level with numerous institutions, including the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Columbia University, Fordham University, New York University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Princeton Theological Seminary, Union Theological Seminary, University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and Yeshiva University. Students may be required to take courses at other universities for supplementary study in their specialty. A student may receive credit for courses taken at these institutions only with the advance approval of the advisor and if they register for them at JTS. These credits are not considered transfer credits. The host institution reserves the right to give its own students priority enrollment.

DHL Consortium

All matriculated DHL students may take courses offered through the DHL consortium, including the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Columbia University, Fordham University, and Union Theological Seminary. Students must receive the advance approval of the advisor and register for those courses on their JTS registration cards. The host institution reserves the right to give its own students priority enrollment.