

KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
Of The City University Of New York  
Department of History, Philosophy and Political Science

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Title: Modern Jewish History  
Number: HIS 64  
Credits/Hours: 3 credits/hours

INTRODUCTION

History of the Jewish people from the mid - 17<sup>th</sup> century to the present. Topics include: the Messianic and Hassidic movements, enlightenment, emancipation and assimilation, the rise of new religious forms, the great migration, nationalism, anti - Semitism, the growth of Hebrew and Yiddish literature, the emergence of Zionism and the establishment of the State of Israel.

OBJECTIVES

1. Comparison between "Modern Jewish History" and "Modern" History.
2. To understand the communal changes of Jewish life and what caused these changes.
3. To understand the difference between the holocaust in the 1600's and the Hitler period.
4. To examine the causes of Messianic movements amongst Jews as well as non Jews.
5. Explore the Jewish Enlightenment movements and the influence of the general enlightenment movement.
6. To examine objectively the struggle for Jewish emancipation and negative aspects.
7. To enable students to understand the various religious movements and as responses to Emancipation.
8. To understand the change of East European Jewry.
9. To explain antisemitism and its different forms.
10. To acquaint the students with the search for a Jewish homeland, the rise of Zionism and the establishment of a Jewish state.
11. To examine the future of the Jewish people in Israel, the United States and the Diaspora.

## ASSESSMENT

1. Discussion of major issues
2. Analysis and comprehension of primary sources
3. Oral presentations
4. Effective use of technological instruments, audio visual aids, computers and the internet
5. Ability to use the historical method in the discipline

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Improving analytical and critical thinking
2. Relating information acquired in class to contemporary society
3. Ability to read newspaper articles and reach an independent judgement of what is closest to the truth
4. Understanding conflicting interpretations of historical issues and reach a valid decision
5. Using the computer and internet for resource

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Evidence of having read assignment
2. Active class participation
3. Term paper demonstrating ability to conduct research and use of electronic resources
4. Evidence by ability to analyze critical primary and secondary readings.
5. Regular attendance
6. Successful completion of three examinations

## COURSE OUTLINE

- I. The Dawn of Modern Judaism
  - A. The approach to Jewish history
  - B. The great Jewish historians
  - C. The debate between historians and the diaspora and Israel
  - D. The difference between Jewish and non-Jewish history
  - E. Bibliography and research
- II. Portrait of Jewish Life in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century
  - A. The communal organizations
  - B. The economic enterprises of jews
  - C. The persecutions
  - D. The Chmielnicki Holocaust, 1648 - 1658

- III. Judaism in Dreamland: The Messianic Sabbetai Zvi Movement and the Aftermath of an Illusion
  - A. Circumstances leading to the Sabbetai Zvi Movement
  - B. Background and character of Sabbetai Zvi
  - C. The Influence of Lurian Mysticism on Sabbetai Zvi and his Movement
  - D. The aftermath of an illusion and reactions fo the Sabbetai Zvi Movement
  - E. The Frankist movement
  
- IV. Hassidism
  - A. Background of Hassidism
  - B. The founders of Hassidism
  - C. The essence of Hassidism
  - D. Relation between Hassidism and Sabbatianism and Lurian Mysticism
  - E. Rabbinic opposition to Hassidism
  - F. Impact of Hassidism
  
- V. Enlightenment (The Haskalah Movement)
  - A. Economic and political changes in European life
  - B. The role of Jews in the development of Capitalism
  - C. The spirit of Enlightenment in Western Europe
  - D. The German Haskalah Movement and Moses Mendelssohn
  
  - E. The attitude of the Enlightened Monarchs and philosophers to Jews
  - F. Evaluation of the Haskalah movement
  
- VI. The French Revolution and the struggle for Emancipation
  - A. The misconceptions about emancipation
  - B. The necessity of emancipation for the modern state
  - C. The debate in the National Assembly
  - D. The attitude of the Jews
  - E. Napoleon and the Jews
  - F. The Process of emancipation
  - G. The defeat of the revolutionary ideas and the subsequent reaction
  - H. The Effects of emancipation upon the individual Jew and the Jewish community
  
- VII. The Jewish response to Emancipation: Reappraisal of Jewish Beliefs
  - A. General developments
  - B. Assimilation and factors contributing to it
  - C. Reform Judaism
  - D. Historical or Conservative Judaism
  - E. Neo - Orthodoxy
  - F. Science of Judaism

- VIII. Portrait of Jewish Life of East European Jewry in the 19<sup>th</sup> century
  - A. Jewish life in Russia and Poland
  - B. The Austrian attitude to Jews
  - C. "Haskalah" in Eastern Europe and the rise of Hebrew literature
  - D. Reactions to the Haskalah movement
  - E. The Musar movement
  
- IX. Rise of Yiddish Literature
  - A. The influences upon this literature
  - B. Its beginnings
  - C. The leading writers and their contributions
  
- X. The Jewish Problem and Search for Solutions
  - A. The Rise of modern Antisemitism
  - B. The causes of modern Antisemitism
  - C. Antisemitism in practice
  - D. Antisemitism in France and the Dreyfus Affair
  - E. The reactions of the West and the Jewish communities
  
- XI. Changes in the Jewish Community
  - A. Population changes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century
  - B. Migrations
  - C. Economic changes in the Jewish community
  - D. The Jewish role in political life
  - E. The rise of American Jewry
  
- XII. Jewish Nationalism: Zionism and the search for Jewish Homeland
  - A. The development of 19<sup>th</sup> century Zionism
  - B. The Palestinian Jewish community in Pre - Zionist days
  - C. Non - political Zionism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century
  - D. Theodore Herzl and Political Zionism
  - E. The Zionist factions
  - F. Alternatives to Zionism
  - G. The Balfour Declaration and the Palestine Mandate
  
- XIII. The Jews in World War I and the Inter - War Period
  - A. The Jewish situation at the outbreak of World War I
  - B. Jewish participation in World War I
  - C. The Peace Conference at Versailles
  - D. The Inter - war Period in Europe

XIV. The Great Catastrophe: The Final Solution of the Jewish Problem

- A. Nazi penetration of Europe
- B. The Nazi conquest of Europe
- C. The Nazi apparatus of extermination
- D. The question of Jewish resistance
- E. The attitude of the allies to Jewish extermination
- F. Attitude of the Jewish population in the allied and neutral camps

XV. The Rise of the State of Israel

- A. The Anglo - American Commission of Inquiry
- B. The U.N. Resolution of November, 1947
- C. The War of Independence
- D. The problems confronting the new state
- E. The International community - The attitude of and relations with the non - Jewish world
- F. The meaning of Israel to world Jewry
- G. The prospects for the Jewish state

XVI. Contemporary Jewry

- A. The American Jewish community
- B. The Jewish community in the Diaspora
- C. Review