I. General Overview of the Course:
This course introduces students to the Jewish religious tradition in its various historical and contemporary manifestations. We will be asking: how has Judaism changed, over time? What divisions does it have, and how does it respond to the challenges of modernity? To answer these questions, our readings and discussion will cover core Jewish “stories” and their ongoing impact on the Jewish religious tradition, Jewish beliefs and practices, key literary classics of the Jewish tradition, varieties of classical and modern Jewish religious expression (for instance, philosophy and mysticism), and the contemporary Jewish movements. Although this is not a history class, we will proceed chronologically in order to appreciate the historical development of Judaism and the roles that memories of the Jewish past play in motivating Jewish religious practices and commitments.

In addition to learning more about Judaism and the Jewish people, you will also have the opportunity to broaden your academic horizons, learn valuable lessons regarding the study of religion in general and, it is hoped, improve your analytic and presentation skills.

This course is open to everyone. There are no prerequisites, and no knowledge of religious studies in general or Judaism in particular is presupposed.

Caveats and additional information
Syllabus: Depending on time constraints and other factors, the instructor may alter the syllabus during the semester. Students will be given notice of such alterations.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.
For grading policies, please see: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx
Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel.
Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu
Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. 
http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio

Students are invited to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at https://evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open.

Readings: Three books are required for this course. There will be additional required readings, which will be available online or will be distributed as handouts. Students should complete readings before the discussion session for which they have been assigned.

Required Texts:
1) Irving Greenberg, The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays. ISBN 0671873032

Grading (how your progress will be assessed in this course):
1) Attendance and Participation 20% A very high participation grade (18-20) is earned by attending almost every class, making comments and asking questions that show that you have completed the readings and podcasts and listened to your classmates and professors. A good A&P (15-17) grade is earned by attending at least 75% of the class and participating every day, but not necessarily making it clear that you have done the readings and/or listened to others. An A&P grade of 14/20 (70%) is earned by attending fewer than 75% of the classes (no matter what kind of comments are made).
2) Three in-class tests 30% Test questions will derive from our readings, podcasts, and class discussions and mini-lectures.
4) Midterm 20%
5) Children’s holiday book presentation 15% (12-18 min oral presentation to your classmates about one of the holiday/Shabbat books in the Judaica library that we will see during our visit to the Judaica library on 1/18.) You will receive more instructions on this assignment.
6) Pop Quizzes 15% These will most likely occur while we are reading The Chosen, as a way to keep us on top of the reading, but there may be 1 or 2 pop quizzes before then. Your lowest pop quiz grade will be dropped.

Grading Scale: final letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale:
A   93-100  C+ 77-79
A-  90-92   C  73-76
B+  87-89   C- 70-72
B   83-86   D  60-69
B-  80-82   E  0-59

For UF policies on grading, please see: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

Schedule:
Part 1: What is Judaism? What Do Jews Do?

Holidays

1) Monday, January 7: What does it mean to be a Jew?
http://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/is-judaism-a-religion-or-a-culture/

Categories: community/culture, rituals/deed, belief/God
2) Wednesday, January 9: **What does it mean to be a Jew? Continued**  
[https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/is-judaism-a-religion-or-a-culture/](https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/is-judaism-a-religion-or-a-culture/)  

3) Friday, January 11  
Shabbat  
Judaism Unbound, episode 100: The Third Era  

4) Monday, January 14:  
Shabbat  
Greenberg, 132-145  
Rabbi David Kaiman visit

5) Wednesday, January 16:  
Rosh Hashanah  
Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur  
Greenberg, Chapter Six

6) Friday, January 18:  
Judaica library visit for Children’s holiday books  
Monday, January 21: Holiday (no class)

7) Wednesday, January 23  
Sukkot  
Greenberg, chapter 4

8) Friday, January 25  
Shavuot  
Greenberg, Chapter 3  

9) Monday, January 28:  
Passover  
Greenberg, Chapter 2

10) Wednesday, January 30:  
*Hanukkah:*  
Greenberg, Chapter 8  
*And... Jews and Christmas:*  

***Thursday, January 31st, 4:30 pm *GI Jews* film screening at the Hippodrome (free)***
11) Friday, February 1:
Test #1 (this test will include an extra credit question that can be answered if you attend GI Jews on Thursday, 1/31)

Part II Life Cycle and the Prayer Life of a Jew

Meaningful religious milestones

12) Monday, February 4:
Jewish Weddings! And… kids?

What If I don’t want kids? http://jpmedia.co/dont-want-kids-episode/

Canvas Kosofsky The Book of Customs, wedding reading

13) Wednesday, February 6
Circumcision
Canvas Kosofsky, The Book of Customs Circumcision reading

14) Friday, February 8:
Bar-Mitzvah
Canvas: Mark Oppenheimer, Thirteen and A Day: The Bar and Bat Mitzvah Across America, 3-20

16) Monday, February 11:
Death
Rabbi Michael Joseph visit
Reuven Hammer, Entering Jewish Prayer, Chapter 14, p. 275-288

A Jewish Relationship with God Through Prayer and Study

15) Wednesday, February 13:
Reuven Hammer, Entering Jewish Prayer, 3-17

16) Friday, February 15:
Reuven Hammer, Entering Jewish Prayer, 17-26

17) Monday, February 18:
Hammer, Entering Jewish Prayer, Chapter two: Using the Liturgy, 27-38

18) Wednesday, February 20:

19) Friday, Feb 22:
Midterm

20) Monday, February 25: Talmud (readings to be distributed)
21) Wednesday, February 27: Talmud (readings to be distributed)

22) Friday, March 1: Sex and the Talmud http://jpmedia.co/mini-episode-hiding-under-the-bed/

Spring break March 2-9

25) Monday, March 11
The Jewish 1950s symposium

26) Wednesday, March 13
Hammer, Chapter 5, The Creation of the Siddur

**Part III Different Kinds of Jews**

27) Friday, March 15
Gastronomic Jews:

28) Monday, March 18: Jews of No Religion, Episode #150
http://www.judaismunbound.com

29) Wednesday, March 20: Episode 151: Judaism from a Transgender Perspective
http://www.judaismunbound.com

30) Friday, March 22:  
**Test #2**

****Questions for the Author: Please submit 2-4 questions for Samira Mehta (about the Beyond Chrismukkah reading) by Sunday, March 24, 4 pm.

31) Monday, March 25: Intermarried Jews  
Canvas: Mehta, Beyond Chrismukkah, 78-111

32) Wednesday, March 27: Intermarried Jews  
Canvas: Mehta, Beyond Chrismukkah, 78-111

33) Friday, March 29:  
The Chosen, chapter 1

34) Monday, April 1:  
The Chosen, through chapter 4  
Joy of Text 401b: Fact or Fiction  
http://jpmedia.co/the-fact-or-fiction-episode/

35) Wednesday, April 3:  
The Chosen, through chapter 5
36) Friday, April 5:
*The Chosen*, through chapter 6 and Hasidic women:

37) Monday, April 8
*The Chosen*, through chapter 10
The idea of Jewish Modesty: http://jpmedia.co/the-tznius-episode/

38) Wednesday, April 10
*The Chosen*, through chapter 11

39) Friday, April 12
*The Chosen*, through chapter 12

40) Monday, April 15
*The Chosen*, through chapter 15
Desire and Judaism: http://jpmedia.co/mini-text-episode-forbidden-fruit-kiddushin-81a-b/

41) Wednesday, April 17
*The Chosen*, finished

42) Friday, April 19
Children’s book presentations

43) Monday, April 22:
Children’s book presentations

44) Wednesday, April 24
test #3