

JEWISH STUDIES, B.A.

Seven Penn State campuses are scheduled for closure after Spring 2027: DuBois, Fayette, New Kensington, Mont Alto, Shenango, Wilkes-Barre, and York. New students are not being admitted at these campuses.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

The Jewish Studies major provides broad inquiry into the history, culture, society, literature, philosophy, politics, language, and religious beliefs of the Jewish people from Biblical times to the present. By nature interdisciplinary, and emphasizing critical thinking and global engagement, the Jewish Studies major is flexible and adaptable to a wide variety of courses of study. Students in the major must complete a total of thirty (30) credits, at least fifteen (15) of which must be at the 400-level. No more than eight (8) credits of Hebrew may count toward the 30-credit total. All students in the major must complete JST 10, an introduction to Jewish Civilization, and select from approved lists or in consultation with the Director three courses that address Jewish studies across its history:

- one course in Jewish Studies of the Ancient through the Medieval periods,
- one course in Jewish Studies of the Early Modern through the Contemporary periods, and
- one course in Jewish Studies of the Diaspora.

All students in the major are particularly encouraged to participate in a relevant internships, education abroad programs, and/or archaeological fieldwork for which course credits and scholarships are available.

Penn State students also may enroll to study abroad at a university in Israel, and up to 15 credits of related education abroad courses in any country may be applied to requirements for the major in consultation with the adviser.

What is Jewish Studies?

Jewish Studies is an interdisciplinary program where students can learn about the history, cultures, literatures, and languages of the Jews. Specializations can include, but are not limited to, Modernity and the Jews; Ancient Israel, Bible, and Early Judaism; Holocaust, Anti-Semitism, and Genocide; Jews in America; Jewish Culture and Literature; Israel and Zionism; or Jewish-Christian Relations.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You want to think critically about the world we all live in.
- You have interest in experiences such as lectures, film series, symposia, discussions, and sponsored trips to museums and Jewish cultural sites.
- You hope to enrich your understanding of Jews, Judaism, and the Jewish experience.