

**RS3320 (13405):
INTRODUCTION TO JUDAISM**

The University of Texas at El Paso
Fall 2023

Instructor: Chavah I. Schwartz
Email: cischwartz@utep.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Judaism has been described as a religion, a race, a nation, and a culture. Each of these descriptions offer different representations of Judaism. The academic study of Judaism allows us to consider the value each of these representations contributes to our understanding of Judaism. This sort of investigation allows us to deal with Judaism as a unique complexity of history, religion, and philosophy. The goal of this course is to introduce students to the academic study of Judaism and the academic value it offers as a field of study.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Nicholas de Lange & Miri Freud-Kandel, eds. *Modern Judaism: An Oxford Guide (1st edition)*. Oxford University Press, 2005.

Grading:

Discussion Boards – 25%
Quizzes – 25%
Essay – 10%
Midterm Exam – 15%
Final Exam – 25%

Course Policies:

This is a reading intensive college level course, and the amount of assigned work reflects that fact. *It is up to each student to maintain their responsibilities for this course.* This is an ‘asynchronous’ online course which means students will have the opportunity to move through the material at their own pace but also means that success in this course will require added discipline to stay on track and not fall behind throughout the semester. Our time together will go by quickly, so it is important that students understand all course policies and expectations to ensure this course offers an environment where everyone can be successful.

Discussion Board Etiquette – Students are always expected to be courteous and respectful towards one another. Any inappropriate or offensive behavior will not be tolerated. Should this become an issue with any student during the semester, the student will not be allowed to participate in discussion boards with others and will not merit credit for those missed. Any offenses that violate university policy will be documented and reported to the appropriate authority. For more information, visit UTEP’s Student Code of Conduct: <https://www.utep.edu/hoop/section-2/student-conduct-and-discipline.html>

Late Work & Make-up Policy – Students are responsible for keeping up with all deadlines. Students will have 48 hours to submit late for half-credit after a deadline has passed. Once this final deadline for submission has passed, additional or retroactive arrangements for credit are no longer possible. Failure to submit assignments and meet course requirements will negatively impact the final grade for the course.

Extra Credit – Students are responsible for their overall success in this course. Please understand there is no obligation to provide extra credit opportunities. Additional arrangements beyond what is detailed here will not be made. There will be one opportunity for extra credit to count toward the midterm exam, and a second opportunity for extra credit to count toward the final exam. More information about these assignments will be provided on Blackboard.

Course Drop – Students are responsible for initiating and completing any course drops. Faculty drops for this course will not be offered. For more information: <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/registrar/students/registration.html>

Course Repeat – A course may only be repeated if the instructor/course content varies. Students who have previously been exposed to the content of this course—and have received a letter grade, audited, or withdrawn—may not repeat this course for credit.

Email:

In accordance with university policy, all email correspondence will be done **exclusively** through our UTEP email addresses. Emails sent from any other accounts will not be opened or viewed. Make sure to include all relevant information in emails: *name & course information*. Please allow at least a 24-hour window for response. For more information: <https://www.utep.edu/information-resources/iso/policies/>

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism:

“Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the *Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP)*, and available in the Office of the Dean of Students and on the homepage of the Dean of Students at www.utep.edu/dos, may result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation to a

failing grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others.” For more information: <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/osccr/>

Disability Accommodations:

“UTEP seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified individuals with disabilities, including learning disabilities. This university will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required affording equal educational opportunity. *It is the student's responsibility to register with The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) within the first two weeks of classes and inform the faculty member to arrange for appropriate accommodations.*” Retroactive arrangements will not apply. For more information about CASS’s policies: <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass/ada-policies/>

The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS): <http://sa.utep.edu/cass/>

Location: Union East Building Room 106

Phone: (915) 747-5148

Email: cass@utep.edu

Blackboard:

Blackboard will be used throughout this course for announcements, course materials, grades, assignment submissions, etc. Take the time to familiarize yourself with Blackboard and the course layout. *Make sure to plan appropriately and anticipate technological issues.* Do not hesitate to contact the Help Desk for assistance with any issues. They are available to assist in-person, over the phone, via email, chat, or by submitting a service request on their website.

UTEP Technology Support: <https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/>

Location: 3rd floor of UTEP Library, Room 300

Phone: 915-747-HELP (4357)

Email: helpdesk@utep.edu

Modules – Modules will become available on Blackboard beginning at midnight on the scheduled date (page 5). Each module will include lecture slides, assignment submission links, etc. The information provided in the modules and slides are provided to help clarify the purpose of the assigned readings and to help guide students through the ideas presented. *Students are ultimately responsible for keeping up with all assigned readings and should not rely solely on the information provided in the modules to complete assignments.* Any cases of academic dishonesty will be documented and reported to the appropriate authority.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS & REQUIREMENTS:

Discussion Boards:

Students will be responsible for participating in *five* discussion boards worth 5% each to count for 25% of the final grade. Each discussion board will detail the necessary requirements for full credit and must be submitted by the scheduled deadline (page 5). The purpose of this assignment is to see that

students understand the ideas presented in the assigned readings and can substantially contribute to an academic discussion about those ideas with their peers. Late submissions will only be eligible for half-credit and cannot be submitted after this final deadline.

Quizzes:

Students will be responsible for completing *five* quizzes worth 5% each to count for 25% of the final grade. Each quiz will cover the assigned readings listed for a module and must be completed by the scheduled deadline (page 5). The purpose of this assignment is to see that students are keeping up with the assigned readings and can answer questions about the ideas presented in the readings. Late submissions will only be eligible for half-credit and cannot be submitted after this final deadline.

Essay:

Students will be responsible for submitting an essay on **Friday, December 1st, 2023**, to count for 10% of the final grade. The essay prompt and submission link will be provided in Module 7 beginning on the scheduled date (page 5). The purpose of this assignment is to see that students can develop their own position on our academic study using the assigned readings studied throughout the semester. Late submissions will only be eligible for half-credit and cannot be submitted after this final deadline.

Midterm Exam:

Students will be responsible for completing a midterm exam on **Friday, October 20th, 2023**, which will count for 15% of the final grade. The midterm exam will consist of multiple-choice questions and cover the assigned material from modules 1-3. The exam will become available in the module on the scheduled day beginning at midnight and will be due by 11:59 p.m. MST. Any exams submitted late will only be eligible for half-credit and cannot be submitted after this final deadline.

Final Exam:

Students will be responsible for completing a final exam on **Monday, December 11th, 2023**, which will count for 25% of the final grade. The exam will be comprehensive and consist of multiple-choice questions. The exam will become available in the module on the scheduled day beginning at midnight and will be due by 11:59 p.m. MST. Any exams submitted late will only be eligible for half-credit and cannot be submitted after this final deadline.

Grading Scale:

- A: 90-100%
- B: 80-89%
- C: 70-79%
- D: 60-69%
- F: 59% and below