



JEWISH HISTORY IS NOW!

The Jewish Identity Program of the Department of Jewish History and Biblical Studies

Exploring Jewish Thought and Wisdom From Biblical Times to the Present

In the wake of the Gaza conflict and the surge of antisemitism across the globe, many young Jewish adults have been grappling with complex questions about their Jewish identities. What does it mean to be Jewish in the 21st century? What are the core elements that unite the Jewish people? Are ancient Jewish texts still relevant today? What role does a distinct Jewish identity play in a world that is becoming increasingly multicultural? Today, the details of Jewish culture, history, and heritage are no longer seen as peripheral, but as essential to comprehending our increasingly turbulent world.

This pivotal moment presents an extraordinary opportunity to launch the new Jewish Identity Program at the University of Haifa. Our department has long offered academic tracks addressing issues in ancient, medieval, and modern Jewish history, literature, and thought. With the only interdisciplinary Jewish Studies program at a university in northern Israel, we provide an intellectually stimulating space for young students from all religious and cultural backgrounds to engage with these profound questions. These tracks will be consolidated in our new program, in which the core elements that bind the Jewish people are explored with depth and nuance, revealing the timeless threads that unite us across generations.

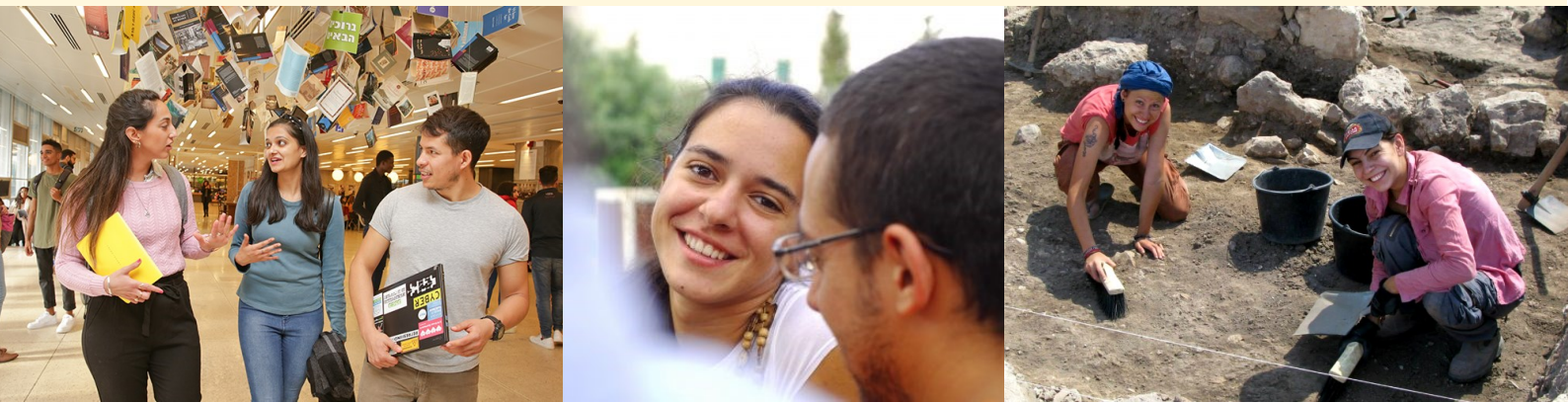


Shaping Tomorrow's Jewish Leaders

Our program is not merely a custodian of the past, but a catalyst for the future—a place where the echoes of history resonate with the challenges of today. Through rigorous scholarship and engaging discourse, we empower young Jewish adults to become architects of a thriving Jewish future, informed by tradition and inspired to tackle the evolving needs of their communities and the world.

The Jewish Identity Program

The Jewish Identity Program will offer a unique blend of historical analysis, philosophical inquiry, and biblical study. This interdisciplinary approach goes beyond memorizing dates to reveal the profound influence of the Jewish experience on humanity. Students explore the rich tapestry of Jewish connections to other cultures, while also gaining valuable research skills through philology, literary criticism, archeology, and sociology. Delving into Jewish thought, the program traces the evolution of Jewish ideas from the Bible to the modern era, encouraging students to grapple with timeless questions and develop critical thinking. At the program's core lies classical Jewish literature, examined through textual criticism and linguistics to unlock its literary power, historical context, and enduring legacy. This integrated program equips students with the knowledge of the past to engage with the complexities of the present and forge their own paths forward.



An Unforgettable Study Abroad Experience

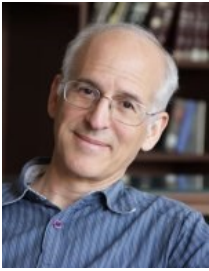
The University of Haifa's Jewish Identity Program will offer international students an unparalleled opportunity to immerse themselves into the rich tapestry of Jewish heritage and thought.

What makes Haifa's offering truly special is its multidisciplinary approach and access to invaluable historical resources. The comprehensive program seamlessly integrates core Jewish studies with complementary fields such as archaeology, environmental sciences, and Holocaust studies, providing students with a well-rounded and in-depth understanding of the subject matter. Situated in a city steeped in cultural significance, students have the opportunity to explore ancient sites, museums, and archives that bring their learning to life, making the educational experience truly immersive and engaging.

The program offerings are taught in English and Hebrew by our approachable faculty members, who are passionate about their subjects and challenge students intellectually. International students will benefit from our highly regarded Hebrew Ulpan program. Learning alongside Israeli students in mixed classes fosters a dynamic and engaging environment.

Administrative support and enrichment programming is provided by the University of Haifa's International School, which has been running successful Study Abroad Programs for more than 35 years. The University of Haifa is a fully accredited university and is recognized internationally as an approved site for study abroad. Academic credits earned are transferable to home institutions.

Academic Leadership



Prof. Hillel Newman (PhD Hebrew University), who serves as Department Chair, is a leading scholar in Jewish civilization of Late Antiquity. A Harvard alumnus, his expertise spans rabbinic literature, Jewish-Christian relations and polemics, and apocalyptic writings of Jews and Christians during the Roman-Byzantine era. Prof. Newman's acclaimed research illuminates the rich diversity of Jewish thought and experience in this pivotal period, shaped by interactions with majority cultures.

Our Students

Our Israeli students bring a rich tapestry of experiences and backgrounds, shaping a vibrant learning community. A painter uses Jewish texts to inspire her work. A disabled IDF veteran finds academic studies a rehabilitation tool. Several students work as tour guides, deepening their understanding of spiritual and cultural heritage. A recent convert gains a broader perspective on her conversion through her studies. Even a law student finds Jewish legal traditions enriching her legal education, offering fresh angles on ethics and morality.

Request for Support

We invite you to partner with us in shaping the future of our academic program, where every contribution—from transformative gifts to modest donations—plays a vital role in nurturing the next generation of scholars and leaders. The funding will be used to:

- a. Retain a faculty member who specializes in Bible, Rabbinic Studies and Jewish Philosophy. The faculty member has a proven track record in attracting students of all ages.
- b. Support student scholarships for BA and MA students.
- c. Fund research activities that will attract graduate students.
- d. Provide financial aid for students returning from IDF reserve duty and those displaced from their homes due to the current crisis.