

MC 387 Jews and Antisemitism
Spring 2021

Instructor: Dr. Amy Simon (she/her)

Email: simonamy@msu.edu

Class meeting time: Tuesday/Thursday 3:00-4:20pm**

Dr. Simon's Office hours: Wednesday 1:00-2:30pm

My Zoom "room": To access this "room" where I will hold all meetings, sign in and search for my name in the James Madison College directory here:

<https://jmc.msu.edu/zoom/>

**Note: This asynchronous class provides learning materials and requirements for interaction with faculty and other students, including deadlines for completion of learning objectives and testing. Classes will be held as Asynchronous. There will be regular individual and small group check-in's on Tuesday/Thursday from 3:00-4:20pm.

Final Paper Due Date/Time: Friday, April 29 2021, 7:45pm

Course Themes and Objectives

This class serves as both a historical evaluation of antisemitism as well as an analysis of antisemitism in the present day. Since the beginning of Christianity, Jews have been singled out for persecution by the majority groups amongst which they have lived. From Europe to the Middle East to the United States, Jewish people have faced various forms of hostility and discrimination. This class will examine some of the most important moments of persecution encountered by the Jewish people because of their ethnic and religious identities as Jews.

Throughout the semester, we will explore definitions, forms, and examples of antisemitism, as well as discuss Jewish responses to it. We will analyze the old forms of antisemitism that focus on images of Jews as parasitic outsiders, and we will examine how that antisemitism has changed, as well as avenues of continuity. We will take special care to discuss current antisemitism throughout the world in the context of historical Jew-hatred, and we will try to understand its more recent impetuses and iterations.

This class will explore how the near annihilation of Europe's Jewish population came about during the Holocaust, and the ways in which antisemitism has continued despite that horrific event. Furthermore, we will examine the ways that the Holocaust and its memory have, at times, even intensified hatred of the Jews. We will examine the relationship between the creation of the State of Israel and an increase in world-wide antisemitism to the current day. And finally, we will discuss the resurgence of antisemitism that has been seen in the United States in the year leading up to the 2016 presidential election and since its conclusion. Overall, we will seek to understand why antisemitism is, indeed, "the longest hatred" and how we can address this problem moving forward.

Graded Assignments:

All deadlines will be on Fridays before midnight. You may submit your work anytime during the week before the Friday night deadline.

All written assignments must be typed and double-spaced in a standard font with 1-inch margins. Please make sure to review, revise and proof your work carefully.

Required Meetings: 10 points each Each student must meet with me 5 times over the course of the semester during the scheduled class time. I will post a sign-up sheet on D2L at the start of the semester. We will meet in small groups depending on each student's schedule. I will pose questions around which to structure our meetings and post them online throughout the semester.

Additional attendance. 10 points. In addition to our regular class sessions, students are required to attend one event related to our course themes. You will write a **500 word reaction** for the event that you attend and submit it on D2L by the end of the week. If it is not possible for you to attend these events, let me know and we will work out alternative assignments.

- As in other Madison classes, you will receive one additional credit beyond your classroom contact hours. This credit reflects the expectation of extensive additional work in this course, as well as contact with your professor during office hours. This credit also reflects course requirements to attend course-related events. Here is a list of relevant events during the semester:

Finifter Panel on *The Holocaust in Greece*, Tuesday, March 23, 12:30-2:30pm

Panel and Book Discussion of *Wandering Jews: Global Jewish Migration*, Tuesday, March 30, 4:30-6:30pm

Rabin/Brill Holocaust Lecture, Dr. Diana Dumitru: "Neighbors in Difficult Times: Jews and Gentiles in the Borderlands of the Soviet Union and Romania during the Holocaust," Thursday, April 8, 12:30-2:00pm

Online Discussion: 6 points each Each week, before Friday night, you will post one reading question and at least two responses to other students' reading questions on a D2L discussion forum. You will complete this through PackBack. You will receive credit for open-ended, content-driven, high quality reading questions and responses. I will engage with the discussion once a week, responding to the board from the previous week on Mondays. You must complete **10** over the course of the semester to receive full credit.

Packback Questions

Participation is a requirement for this course, and the Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class topics. Packback Questions is an online community where you can be fearlessly curious and ask open-ended questions to build on top of what we are covering in class and relate topics to real-world applications.

Packback Requirements:

Your participation on Packback will count toward 12% of your overall course grade.

There will be a Weekly Friday at 11:59pm EST deadline for submissions. In order to receive your points per week, you should submit the following per each deadline period:

- 1 open-ended Question per week with a minimum Curiosity Score of 60, each worth 2pts of each assignment grade
- 2 Responses per week with a minimum Curiosity Score of 60, each worth 2pts of each assignment grade
- Half credit will be provided for questions and responses that do not meet the minimum curiosity score.

How to Register on Packback:

An email invitation will be sent to you from help@packback.co prompting you to finish registration. If you don't receive an email (be sure to check your spam), you may register by following the instructions below:

1. Create an account by navigating to <https://questions.packback.co> and clicking "Sign up for an Account"
Note: If you already have an account on Packback you can log in with your credentials.
2. Then enter our class community's lookup key into the "Looking to join a community you don't see here?" section in Packback at the bottom of the homepage.

Community Lookup Key: **223d7e62-962b-4a31-b3a6-f4d580d72aa4**

3. Follow the instructions on your screen to finish your registration.

How to Get Help from the Packback Team:

If you have any questions or concerns about Packback throughout the semester, please read their FAQ at help.packback.co. If you need more help, contact their customer support team directly at help@packback.co.

For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video: vimeo.com/packback/Welcome-to-Packback-Questions

Special Discussion Response on the events of January 6, 2021: **10 points** (graded on completion of all listed requirements)

I will post several images and newspaper articles for you to engage with regarding the attack on the US Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Please write a 300-500 word response to the question: What is the relationship between antisemitism and the recent events at the United States Capitol? Please use references from at least two of the materials I have provided (they do not need to be formal references—you can just describe the source).

Thinking Question Papers (2): 70 points each In these papers, I would like for you to answer three of the "thinking questions" I posed in the weekly mini-lecture, one each from three separate weeks. Please clearly indicate the week number of the mini-lecture, and list the exact questions you will answer. These papers should be 1000-

1200 words in length (approximately 3-4 pages, typed, double-spaced). These papers have a rolling deadline. You may submit the first one any time before February 19, and the second any time before April 29. I will post a rubric and guidelines for these papers to D2L.

Blogging Antisemitism Assignment: 10 points each

We will work together to create a blog in which you will trace and analyze instances of antisemitism in the news throughout the semester. You will be required to post at least five entries during the semester, including a **250 word analysis** of the story. Completion of these posts is an important part of your participation grade. I will comment on new blog posts each Monday.

Final Project: Secondary Source Research Paper

Paper proposal with research questions This is worth **30 points**.

Annotated bibliography (with 5 sources). **30 points**.

Final paper (3000-3600 word research paper, approximately 10 pages, typed, double spaced) This is worth **120 points**.

Extra credit: 10 points added to a Thinking Question Paper: Participation in MSU Religion dialogues—more information to follow

The total number of points you can earn over the course of the semester is 500. You can calculate your percentage to get your grade.

Due Dates

Week ending January 29	Special Discussion response
Week ending February 19	First Thinking Question Paper
Week ending March 12	Final Paper Proposal with research questions
Week ending March 26	Annotated Bibliography
Week ending April 2	Second Thinking Question Paper
April 29 by 7:45pm	Final paper

Grading policies

All written assignments must be typed and double-spaced in a standard font with 1-inch margins. Please make sure to review, revise and proof your work carefully. All written assignments should be posted in the appropriate D2L dropbox.

Grades

4.0 (90-100%) Exceptional Work

This is work of the highest standard. It should be factually correct, clear and concise. The work should be analytical. It should provide a reasoned critique rather than mere summary of scholarly opinion. It should show awareness of context as well as the ability to make comparisons. Work of this class will always demonstrate the capacity for original thought. It will also demonstrate high technical competency.

3.5 (85-89%) Excellent Work

Good, competent work, but without the flare which characterizes 4.0 work. It should demonstrate a good command of the material and the ability to approach it critically,

making reasoned arguments based on the effective use of evidence. Some originality of thought is expected. It will demonstrate reasonable technical competency.

3.0 (80-84%) Good Work

This work demonstrates a good command of the material and a basic argument, but may suffer from mistakes in grammar and/or problems with organization. Such work will not be as convincing as 3.5 work because of a less-developed use of evidence or logical argumentation.

2.5 (75-79%) Novice Work

This work demonstrates some understanding of the material, but will have one or more major flaw in the argument, comprehension of the texts analyzed, or comprehension of the question asked. This work may nod at analysis but consist primarily of summary. The writing will make sense but will have mistakes throughout. The author may use some evidence, but not enough to make a convincing argument.

2.0 (70-74%) Developing Work

Work which is of undistinguished quality, demonstrating an imperfect command of the material, and, in consequence, the inability to treat it critically. Such work will generally consist of mere summaries, with very little analysis. It will usually be poorly written, often suggesting last-minute preparation and poor technical accuracy.

1.5 (65-69%) Unsatisfactory Work

Work which is deficient in almost every respect, but which demonstrates enough effort on the part of the student to earn the minimum level of pass. Work of this standard generally reflects lack of preparation and effort.

1.0 (below 65%) Insufficient Work

Work which is of such poor quality that it cannot be awarded a passing grade. It will demonstrate complete failure to understand or to engage with the assignment, an absence of critical treatment, and poor presentation.

Academic Integrity

From the MSU handbook:

“The principles of truth and honesty are fundamental to the educational process and the academic integrity of the University; therefore, no student shall:

- claim or submit the academic work of another as one’s own.
- procure, provide, accept or use any materials containing questions or answers to any examination or assignment without proper authorization.
- complete or attempt to complete any assignment or examination for another individual without proper authorization.
- allow any examination or assignment to be completed for oneself, in part or in total, by another without proper authorization.
- alter, tamper with, appropriate, destroy or otherwise interfere with the research, resources, or other academic work of another person.
- fabricate or falsify data or results.”

Plagiarism means knowingly, or by carelessness or negligence, representing as one's own in any academic exercise the words, ideas, works of art or computer-generated information and images of someone else. For example:

- Turning in as your own, work done in whole or in part by someone else, or
- Paraphrasing or copying material from a written source, including the Internet, without footnoting or referencing it in a paper, or
- Copying material from a written source, including the Internet, without using quotation marks to indicate wording that is not yours, or
- Turning in a paper obtained at least in part from a term paper “mill” or website, or
- Turning in a paper copied at least in part from another student’s paper, whether or not that student is currently taking the same course.

The MSU policy on plagiarism and additional information about academic honesty is also available through the MSU Office of the Ombudsman:

<https://www.msu.edu/~ombud/academic-integrity/index.html#integrity> If you have any questions about academic honesty after reviewing this information, please consult with me or Jeff Judge, Director of Academic and Student Affairs.

If I find that you have committed an act of academic misconduct, you will receive a grade of zero for that assignment and will be reported to MSU. If you are not sure if you have plagiarized something in your work, **please ask me** for help before you turn in the assignment.

Students with Disabilities

Students with documented disabilities are provided academic accommodations through the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities in 120 Bessey Hall, 353-9642, rcpd@msu.edu. If you need academic accommodations, please let me know your specific needs by the second week of classes so that I can work with you effectively. If you are unclear as to what constitutes a disability or what help you may be entitled to, please talk with me or someone at the Resource Center.

Resources

Office Hours

My regular office hours are listed above. They will all take place over Zoom and will be open to everyone—just pop in using my Zoom “room.” I will use the waiting room to allow in students on a first-come, first-served basis. If you need to meet with me outside of those times, please schedule via Calendly using this link:

<https://calendly.com/simonamy>

MSU Writing Center

You can schedule an appointment with the MSU Writing Center whose consultants can help you with any part of your writing process. Please visit <https://writing.msu.edu/> for more information or to schedule an appointment.

MSU Counseling and Psychiatric Services

MSU has a growing number of counseling services to help you cope with any issues that you may be dealing with throughout your time here. Please use these services and know that the faculty and staff at MSU are here to help you in any way that we can.

***CAPS is providing remote crisis services 24/7/365. Students can call 517-355-8270 and press “1” at the prompt to speak with a crisis counselor. Other prompt options are available for those not in crisis.

For all counseling services, go to:

<https://caps.msu.edu/>

Technical Assistance

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem you can:

- Visit the MSU Help site at <http://help.msu.edu>
- Visit the Desire2Learn (D2L) Help Site at <http://help.d2l.msu.edu>
- Call the MSU IT Service Desk at (517)432-6200, (844)678-6200, or e-mail at ithelp@msu.edu

JMC Writing Consultancy

Hours: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday 7:00-10:00 p.m over Zoom.
Please make an appointment here: <https://jmc.msu.edu/current-students/academics/writing-consultancy/index.html>

Religious Observance Policy

It is the policy of the University to permit students and faculty to observe those holidays set aside by their chosen religious faith.

The faculty and staff should be sensitive to the observance of these holidays so that students who absent themselves from classes on these days are not disadvantaged. It is the responsibility of those students who wish to be absent to make arrangements in advance with their instructors.

For any religious observance adjustments you need during the semester, please just let me know and we will work it out.

University Policy on Relationship Violence and Sexual Assault

All staff and faculty at MSU must report incidents they learn about regarding relationship violence and sexual assault to OIE and MSU Police. This is in order to help victims get the assistance they need, and to help bring perpetrators to justice. Here is the University’s statement on mandatory reporting: “All University employees...are expected to promptly report relationship violence, stalking, and sexual misconduct that they observe or learn about and that involves a member of the

University community (faculty, staff, or student) or which occurred at a University-sponsored event or on University property.”

To get help in the case of sexual assault, contact the MSU Sexual Assault Program:

- Call to set up an appointment 517-355-3551, 8:00am-5:00pm
- 24 hour crisis line: 517-372-6666
- <https://centerforsurvivors.msu.edu/>

You can also contact:

- MSU Safe Place at 517.355.1100 or <http://safeplace.msu.edu/>

Classroom Policies:

Email: Any time you send me an email, please put the course number in the subject line. This is an enormous help to me in sorting emails and responding to you in a timely manner. I will respond to your email within 24 hours during the week.

Late Work: This applies to the writing assignments for this class. All assignments will be due by midnight on Friday the week they are assigned. If you need an extension for any reason, please email me. **All extensions will be approved**, but I need notice so that I can plan my grading to give everyone appropriate feedback.

Civility: Especially because of the difficult nature of the topic we will be discussing, students must address each other and the professor with civility at all times, both in person and over email. This means addressing each other with respect, even in the process of engaging in academic debate, and never resorting to aggressive, offensive, or hostile language or behavior. Anyone who does not adhere to this expectation can expect to lose credit.

JMC Statement of Values: “As Madisonians, we affirm the necessity of compassion, conscientiousness, and curiosity in our community. We acknowledge our academic and moral responsibility to always seek to learn from one another, approaching our scholarly endeavors with respect and humility. We understand that this process can be uncomfortable, and that it often requires challenging closely held beliefs. Nevertheless, we strive to always participate in discussions in good faith, and to build a community conducive to the intellectual growth of all.”

Q&A Board: For general, logistical questions, please use the Q&A forum on D2L. This will be a clearinghouse for all questions so that everyone in the class will benefit from the answers. You can access it on D2L under Communication, Discussions, Q&A.

Course Materials

All required books are available for purchase from the Spartan Bookstore, many can be found for reduced prices on Amazon or Abebooks, and most are available at the library. Primary source readings and shorter articles will be posted on D2L. If you have circumstances that make it difficult to purchase the books, please let me know.

1. Nirenberg, David. *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2013.

2. Goldberg, Sol, ed. *Key Concepts in the Study of Antisemitism*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2021.

CALENDAR

Anti-Judaism and Early Christianity

Week 1

Jan. 11-15 **Introduction and overview**

- Review syllabus and welcome materials on D2L
- Activities: Complete online syllabus survey, start of class questionnaire

Week 2

Jan. 18-22 **Anti-Judaism in early Christianity**

- Read: Blog slides and get logged in to the blog
- Read: Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism*, Chs. 2 and 3

Medieval Anti-Judaism

Week 3: Special Discussion Response due at the end of the week

Jan. 25-29 **Medieval Anti-Judaism and Islam**

- Watch: Simon Schama, “The Story of the Jews: Among Believers” minutes 21-32 (PBS through MSU library)
- Read: Goeitein, *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions*, pp. 3-bottom 15; pp. 142-149 (on D2L)
- Read: Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism*, Ch. 4

Week 4

Feb. 1-5 **Medieval Anti-Judaism and the Blood Libel**

- Read: Hillel Kieval, “Blood Libel,” (chapter 5) in *Key Concepts in the Study of Antisemitism*
- Read: Primary source, Thomas of Monmouth, *The Life and Martyrdrom of St. William of Norwich* (on D2L)

Week 5

Feb. 8-12 **Medieval Anti-Judaism and the Spanish Inquisition and Expulsion**

- Read: Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism*, Ch. 6
- Read: Primary Sources on Spanish Inquisition and Expulsion (on D2L)

Shift to Modernity

Week 6 Thinking Question 1 due at the end of this week:

Feb. 15-19 **Enlightenment**

- Read: Frederick Beiser, “Emancipation,” (chapter 8) in *Key Concepts in the Study of Antisemitism*
- Read: Hess article on Michaelis (on D2L)

Shift to Modernity/Shift toward violence, 19th century

- Read: Primary source documents (on D2L)
- Read: Robert Bernasconi, “Racism,” (chapter 19), in *Key Concepts in the Study of Antisemitism*, p. 245 through the penultimate paragraph on p. 250

Week 7

Feb. 22-26 **Pogroms, 1881-1905**

- Read: Klier, *Pogroms*, pp. 3-12; 43-61, 194-247 (on D2L)

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion in Europe and the United States

Week 8

Mar. 1-5

Russian Antisemitism: *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, development of Zionsim as a national movement

- Read: Scott Ury, “Zionism” (chapter 22) in *Key Concepts in the Study of Antisemitism*, pp. 287-middle 292
- Read: Jovan Byford, “Conspiracy Theories” (chapter 7) in *Key Concepts in the Study of Antisemitism*
- Read: Steven Zipperstein, TBA

Week 9 Final paper proposal due at the end of this week

Mar. 8-12 **Henry Ford and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion**

- Read: Woeste, *Henry Ford’s War on the Jews*, pp. 19-52. E-book available online through the MSU library: <http://catalog.lib.msu.edu/record=b10152981~S39a>
- Read: Primary sources, *Dearborn Independent* (on D2L)
- Read: Primary sources, selections from Ford, *The International Jew* (on D2L)

Week 10: Holocaust

Mar. 15-19 **Nazi Antisemitism**

- Read: Alon Confino, *A World Without Jews*. Introduction, first 16.5 pages. E-book available online through the MSU library: <http://catalog.lib.msu.edu/record=b12337052~S39a>
- Read: Doris Bergen, “Nazism” (chapter 14) in *Key Concepts in the Study of Antisemitism*
- Watch: *Der Ewige Jude* (link on D2L)

Postwar Antisemitism in the US

Week 11 Annotated Bibliography due at the end of th is week

Mar. 22-26 **Postwar Antisemitism in the US** (Revised Thesis Statement due)

- Read: David Gerber, *Antisemitism in American History* pp. 7-36 (D2L)

- Read: Fermaglich, *A Rosenberg by Any Other Name*, Introduction (D2L)
- Watch: *Gentleman's Agreement* (available online through archive.org)

Week 12 Thinking Question 2 due at the end of this week

Mar. 29-Apr. 2 **Jews and "Whiteness," Jews of Color in the US**

- Read: David Schraub, "White Jews: An Intersectional Approach" (D2L)
- Read: Bruce Haynes, *The Soul of Judaism*, TBA (D2L)

Contemporary Antisemitism

Week 13

Apr. 5-9

- Read: James Loeffler, "Anti-Zionism" (chapter 4) in *Key Concepts in the Study of Antisemitism*
- Read: Bernard Harrison, *Blaming the Jews*, chapter 8, "The Legacy of 1967." Link: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv177thzm.2>

Week 14

Apr. 12-16 **(Israel, The Left, and BDS)**

- Read: "Right v. Right" by Amos Oz, recommended by Yael
- Read: Rachel Harris, Martin Shichtman, "BDS, Credibility, and the Challenge to the Academy" (D2L)
- Watch: *Viral: Antisemitism in Four Mutations*, "Antisemitism in the United Kingdom." Link: <http://ezproxy.msu.edu/login?url=https://video.alexanderstreet.com/watch/viral-antisemitism-in-four-mutations>

Week 15

Apr. 19-23

Antisemitism and the "Alt-right"

- Read: George Hawley, *Making Sense of the Alt-Right*, Introduction and chapter 3 (D2L)

Thursday, April 29, final papers due on D2L by 7:45pm.

***Note, this syllabus is only a plan and is subject to change at any time. I will make clear any changes in class and by email.