

JST 305 W: *Antisemitism*  
Fall 2022  
TTH 3:25–4:40 pm

Instructor: Prof. Corinne E. Blackmer

### **Course Description**

This course is an advanced introduction to the history and modern manifestations of antisemitism. We will consider the origins of what some have called “the oldest hatred” and ask why it has persisted in so many contexts. How prevalent is it today? What actual harm does it do — to Jews and others? We will identify ways that it is similar to other prejudices and consider ways in which it is unique. Is antisemitism a form of religious intolerance? Is it racism? Or is it some other kinds of bigotry?

We will also ask where antisemitism thrives. Is it unique to certain generations? To a particular religious group? To a certain region of the world? To right-wingers? To left-wingers?

And, turning outward, what does learning about antisemitism teach us about different forms of hatred that plague our world — and what we can do about it. We will see if our knowledge helps us to think about world events differently.

Readings are designed to be engaging and relevant. We will consult primary sources, well-crafted secondary essays, news articles, video testimonials, even a few graphic novels. A component of this course will be tracking current events and considering them through the lens of what we are learning, to understand how antisemitism plays out in the world in real time. This course is a writing intensive course and clear, concise (short) writing assignments are considered an integral part of the learning experience.

### **Required Texts**

*READINGS ONLINE*

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

1. To understand the historical roots of antisemitism.
2. To understand the consequences of antisemitism.
3. To recognize antisemitism in its contemporary forms.
4. To write clearly and concisely about antisemitism.

### **Course Requirements and Methods of Evaluation**

10 single-page papers	60%
Final project and presentation	20%
Participation and preparation	20%

## Course Policies

1) **Attendance.** Attendance is mandatory, but allowance will be made under circumstances of documented illness or personal emergency. You are allowed three excused absences for the semester. More than four unexcused absences shall result in automatic failure unless you have prior arrangements with me.

2) **Plagiarism:** Both the university catalog and the student handbook have university-wide policies on academic dishonesty with which all students and instructors should become familiar. According to the circumstances, instructors may choose to deal with plagiarism in any way ranging from requiring a rewrite of the assignment, to failing the assignment, to failing the student for the course, to referring the matter to the Dean of Arts & Sciences with a request to pursue university disciplinary action.

How do I know if it is plagiarism?

1. Are they your words? If not, they should be in quotation marks and citation given.
2. Is it your idea? If it is not, and if it is not an idea that is *widely* circulated, attribution should be given.

These rules seem simple, but there are cases that can feel confusing. I'm here to help. If you are unsure whether something requires citation or attribution, please email me to ask: [rscheinerman@myjewishlearning.com](mailto:rscheinerman@myjewishlearning.com). There are no excuses for not doing your own work and I can be very forgiving of many challenges you may be experiencing, personally or intellectually, but I have no patience with cheating.

3) **Disabilities and Academic Success:** The Center for Academic Success and Accessibility Services (CASAS) provides comprehensive support for Southern students. CASAS houses the University's tutoring, writing support services, and PALS as well as academic coaching and programming related to your success in the academic environment. Additionally, Southern provides reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, for students with documented disabilities on an individualized basis. If you are a student with a documented disability, the University's Accessibility Services can work with you to determine appropriate accommodations. Before you receive accommodations in this class, you will need to make an appointment with Accessibility Services, located in Buley Library, Rm 303. To discuss your approved accommodations or other concerns, such as medical emergencies or arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment to meet as soon as possible.

4) **Sexual Misconduct:** Southern Connecticut State University is highly committed to providing you with an educational experience that is academically and socially enriching. In line with this mission, we enforce Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 which prohibits acts of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual

exploitation and stalking) at educational institutions. To report sexual misconduct students should contact University Police at (203) 392-5375 or 911, and/or Paula Rice, Title IX Coordinator, Office of Diversity and Equity, at (203) 392-5491 and/or Christopher Piscitelli, Office of Student Conduct and Civic Responsibility, at (203) 392-6188. For advocacy and further information including your Title IX rights and reporting procedures visit the Title IX website at [www.southernct.edu/sexual-misconduct](http://www.southernct.edu/sexual-misconduct) and/or the Support and Resource Team (S.A.R.T.) website at <https://inside.southernct.edu/vpas/sart>. Please contact Catherine Christy, Violence Prevention, Victim Advocacy and Support (VPAS) Center and S.A.R.T. Coordinator, at (203) 392-6946 for assistance or with any questions regarding support and advocacy.

**5) Undocumented Students Support:** Southern Connecticut State University values diversity in all of its forms. We welcome and support students of all races, genders, linguistic backgrounds, abilities, sexual orientations, religions, nationalities and immigration status. In particular, we stand in support of the approximately 5,000 undocumented students currently studying at colleges and universities in Connecticut, many of whom arrived as minors and who call Connecticut their home. We consider them a valuable part of our community and are committed to ensuring they continue to pursue their personal and professional goals in a supportive and welcoming environment. SCSU has an Undocumented Student Support Team, the DREAMers Action Alliance, which has compiled resources for members of our community. If you need these resources, visit <https://www.southernct.edu/undocumented-students/>.

## Course Schedule

Note: Throughout the course, we will be tracking antisemitism in the news. Most scheduled readings are short with the understanding that you will also be keeping an eye out for news stories, op eds, and contemporary discussion of this topic. I recommend you set up a [Google news alert](#) for the subject “antisemitism” and that, when something significant happens, you check the [Jewish Telegraph Agency](#), a 100-year-old Jewish news wire service, for more context. Please come to class armed with articles that you find — we will make time to discuss them. The purpose of this course is not just to understand the history of antisemitism or the theoretical problems it presents, but to understand how it is played out in our world in real time.

## Week 1: What is antisemitism? How big is the problem?

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|--------|---|
| T 8.30 | <a href="#">“Why is Antisemitism Still Around?” (Youtube video)</a><br><a href="#">“Antisemitism 101” (myjewishlearning.com)</a>  |
| Th 9.1 | <a href="#">“Do Jews Cause Antisemitism?” (Youtube video)</a><br><a href="#">“Whose Fault is Antisemitism?” (Youtube video)</a><br><a href="#">“Where the Word ‘Anti-Semitism’ Comes From” (myjewishlearning.com)</a> |

## Week 2: The origins of antisemitism

- T 8.31      ["The Historical Roots of Antisemitism," \*My Jewish Learning\*](#)  
1 Thessalonians 2:14-16, Epistle to the Hebrews
- TH 9.2      Gospel of Matthew, Gospel of John (selections)  
"Matthew, Mark and Luke: Good News or Bad?" by Amy-Jill Levine and "The Gospel of John: How 'the Jews' Became Part of the Plot" by Adele Reinhartz in *Jesus, Judaism & Christian Anti-Judaism*

## Week 3: Antisemitism in Medieval Europe

- T 9.6      St. Augustine, *Contra Faustina*, chapter 12  
St. Augustine, *City of God*, book 18, chapters 45 and 46
- TH 9.8      Passion Plays and Crusades  
["How the Crusades Affected Medieval European Jews" \(myjewishlearning.com\)](#)  
["Jews and Money" \(myjewishlearning.com\)](#)  
David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism*, chapter 5

## Week 4: Jumping to modernity

- T 9.13      Karl Marx, On the Jewish Question (short excerpt)  
["The Dreyfus Affair" \(myjewishlearning.com\)](#)
- TH 9.15      ["The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" \(myjewishlearning.com\)](#)  
Will Eisner, *The Plot*

## Week 5: The Holocaust

- T 9.20      ["Auschwitz-Birkenau" \(myjewishlearning.com\)](#)  
["Children in the Holocaust" \(myjewishlearning.com\)](#)  
["Who Was Josef Mengele?" \(myjewishlearning.com\)](#)  
Art Spiegelman, *Maus*

Due Wednesday 9/21 at 6pm: One page on the subject: TBD

- TH 9.22      Art Spiegelman, *Maus*

## Week 6: Holocaust Denial

T 9.27 Rosh Hashanah, no class  
Holocaust archives assignment

TH 9.29 excerpts from Deborah Lipstadt's *History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier* (2005)

- Also a major motion picture! *Denial* (2016)

## Week 7: Antisemitism on the Right

T 10.4 Erev Yom Kippur, no class  
Holocaust archives assignment

TH 10.6 Eric K. Ward, "[Skin in the Game](#)" (online article)  
["My Great-Grandparents Didn't Flee Antisemitism for this" \(heyalma\)](#)

## Week 8:

T 10.11 Sukkot, no class

TH 10.13 Molly Patterson, "Crusaders for Armageddon: Christian Zionism and Antisemitism in the United States," in *Poisoning the Wells*

## Week 9:

T 10.18 Simchat Torah, no class

TH 10.20 ["Antisemitism in America" \(myjewishlearning.com\)](#)  
[Jonathan Sarna, "Antisemitism is a Symptom"](#)

## Week 10 : Antisemitism on the Left

T 10.25 [Alma's Guide to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict \(online resource\)](#)  
["Is Criticizing Israel Antisemitic?" \(youtube video\)](#)

TH 10.27 David Baddiel, *Jews Don't Count* (selections)  
["I Took My Jewish Husband's Last Name" \(heyalma.com\)](#)

## **Week 11:**

- T 11.1 Susie Linfield, *The Lion's Den*, introduction  
["Why is there so much antisemitism in the vegan movement?" \(heyalma.com\)](http://heyalma.com)
- TH 11.3 Day to catch up on contemporary events. Bring your news clippings to class!

## **Week 12: Jews and Blacks**

- T 11.8 James Baldwin, "Negroes are Anti-Semitic Because They're Anti-White," *The New York Times* (9 April 1967)  
Norman Podhoretz, "My Negro Problem—And Ours," *Commentary* (February, 1963)
- TH 11.10 Julius Lester, "The Lives People Live"

## **Week 13: Antisemitism on the Web**

- T 11.15 "Holocaust Denial on the Web: Confronting the Future of Antisemitism" by Joel Finkelstein, Corinne E. Blackmer, and Charles Rubin  
["Marjorie Taylor-Greene's Antisemitism Explained" \(heyalma\)](http://heyalma.com)
- TH 11.17 No reading assignment, students assigned to spend time looking at antisemitic websites and report back.

## **Week 14**

Thanksgiving—no classes

## **Week 15: Jewish Response to Antisemitism**

- T 11.29 Dara Horn's lecture: ["The Eichman Problem: What Jews Really Believe About Antisemitism" \(Eli Talk — a Jewish version of the TED talks\)](http://heyalma.com)  
["I Broke up with a Friend over Antisemitism. It hurts." \(heyalma\)](http://heyalma.com)
- TH 12.1 Jasper Vyda, ["Why Antisemitism is a Problem for Everyone" \(TED talk\)](http://heyalma.com)  
["Is the Focus on Antisemitism Overblown?" \(youtube video\)](http://heyalma.com)  
["How to Fight Antisemitism" \(myjewishlearning.com\)](http://myjewishlearning.com)

## **Week 16**

T 12.6      Class presentations

TH 12.8      Class presentations