This course explores Jewish immigration, settlement, cultural production and religious life from the earliest instances of European conquest and colonization of the Americas until the present day. The Americas are not just a geographic space, but they also function as a dreamscape – paradise, savage frontier, land of refuge, or an El Dorado. We will explore the interplay between Jews, Judaism and the realities and mythologies of Latin America. The majority of the material will come from the Spanish and Portuguese zones of Central and South America with attention given to the Jewish communities of the Dutch and English colonies of the Caribbean such as Curaçao and Jamaica. The investigation into the colonial period will focus more heavily on aspects of Sephardic history such as crypto-Judaism, Inquisitorial persecution and the expansion of the western Sephardim to the New World. As the course moves into the modern period, more emphasis will be placed on the experience of Eastern European Jewish immigrants and their descendants. Secondary sources will provide the wider historical context for the wide range of primary texts that will be at the center of the class discussion.
Goals of the course:
* Develop textual and analytical skills through careful engagement with primary sources
* Empower the student to think critically, creatively and personally about the texts and their historical context
* Examine the complexities and ambiguities of culture, society and identity

Please Note: If you are a student with a documented disability and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

Structure of the Course and Grading Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction Papers</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Essay Project</td>
<td>70%</td>
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The class will meet once a week and consist of interactive lectures, student presentations and group discussions of the texts and historical issues under consideration. Performance will be judged on the basis of participation in class discussions, reaction papers, oral presentations, and the final research project.
Participation (10%): Attendance, knowledge of assigned readings and active participation in class discussions. (You are expected to bring the relevant readings to class.)

The class is designed to allow for a plurality of voices. You will be expected to share your insights and questions with the class on a regular basis. It is your responsibility to come to class with good questions and concerns about the readings; you are not expected to have definitive answers to these questions.

In addition you are required to submit a question or brief comment regarding the readings to the professor by 1pm of the day of class via ANGEL.

When you must miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed as well as the assignment for the next meeting. Please consult a fellow student in the class for this information. If you would like clarification on any point, however, I will be available on email or during office hours.

*Each student will be responsible to introduce one of the primary or secondary texts at some point in the semester.

Reaction Papers (10%):

To help promote meaningful conversations you will be required to write 2 short reaction papers based on your readings. You should focus on one aspect of the reading that you find intriguing. You can also use it as an opportunity to reflect on the connection between different issues that we have previously discussed.

It is essential that your essay develop an idea and reflect a coherent process of analysis and interpretation of the text or issue you decide to write about.

You are free to decide when to write a reaction paper but at least one of these papers must be written before November 1.
The essays should be uploaded to the drop box on ANGEL.

Annotated Bibliography (10%): You will prepare an annotated bibliography on a topic of your choosing.

Final Project (70%): Each student will write a research paper dealing with a topic that they have independently researched. At the end of the semester there will be a forum for the students to share their research and ideas.

Readings: Readings: You will be responsible for the primary texts and secondary readings assigned for each week. The reading will enable you to participate in the discussions of both the literary texts and the larger historical issues covered each week.

Required text:
Multiple copies of this book can be found online at very reasonable prices.

All other text for this course will be available digitally either through ANGEL or E-RES. **Every student is responsible to have an accessible copy of the primary and secondary texts for class either in the form of a hard copy (print-out) or on their personal laptops in class.** We will make ample use of these sources during our class discussions.

September 6: Introduction
Expulsion and Discovery: Old World and New World Intertwined
“I, a Jew?” Jorge Luis Borges
Selections from Columbus’ Diaries

September 13: Session 2
New World Paradise?: the Americas as screen for Old World hopes and fears
*Columbus’ Fourth Voyage (PDF on Angel)
**Noah J. Efron, “Knowledge of Newly Discovered Lands among Jewish Communities of Europe (From 1492 to the Thirty Years War)”, *Jews and Expansion of Europe to the West 1450-1800* 47-72.
***Steven Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions* selections

State of the Field:
Raanan Rein, Introduction: New Approaches to Latin American Jewish Studies

Article Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/20689545

September 20: Session 3
Conversos and Crypto-Jews in New Spain


Optional:
“Some Misconceptions About the Crypto-Jews in Colonial Mexico”
MARTIN A COHEN *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* (1961-1978); Sep 1971-Jun 1972; 61, 1-4; AJHS Journal pg. 277
September 27: Session 4
Of Conversos, Contraband, and Global Conspiracies: Conversos in South America
J. I. Israel, “Chapter Four: Buenos Aires, Tucumán and the River Plate Route: Portuguese conversos and the ‘commercial subversion’ of the Spanish Indies (1580-1640)” Diasporas within a Diaspora 125-150.


Eli Nazareño/Maldonado da Silva: Converso Surgeon/New World Martyr
George Alexander Kohut, “The Trial of Francisco Maldonado de Silva”, PAJHS Vol. 11, 1903
* 2 elegies for Maldonado da Silva

Marcos Aguinis, A Marrano on Trial Before the Holy Office of the Inquisition


October 4: Session 5
Tropical Synagogues: Open Judaism in the Dutch Caribbean
Recife: First Open Jewish Community of the Americas
Bruno Feitler, “Jews and New Christians in Dutch Brazil, 1630-1654”, Atlantic Diasporas 123-151

Arnold Wiznitzer, Jewish soldiers in Dutch Brazil 1630-1654 PAJHS Vol. 46, 1956

Succot Break

October 24: Session 6
Amsterdam, New Amsterdam and the expansion of Open Jewish Communities in the Americas
James Homer Williams, “An Atlantic Perspective on the Jewish Struggle for Rights and Opportunities in Brazil, New Netherland, and New York” The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West pp 369-393

Meyer Kayserling, “Isaac Aboab, The First Jewish Author in America” Volume 5, 1897
November 1: Session 7
Sacred Space: constructing Jewish identity brick by brick
Rachel Frankel “Antecedents and Remnants of Jodensavanne: The Synagogues and Cemeteries of the First Permanent Plantation Settlement of New World Jews”
In The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West 394-438
Aviva Ben Ur, “Still Life: Sephardi, Ashkenazi, and West African Art and Form in Suriname's Jewish Cemeteries”
American Jewish History, Volume 92, Number 1, March 2004, pp. 31-79
Jews and Blacks: Atlantic trade, African slavery and the early modern Sephardic world

November 8: Session 8
Polacos y Turcos: Old World Immigration to Latin America

Syncreticism, mestizage and the ghosts of memory

November 15: Session 9
Gauchos Judíos: Agricultural Settlements and the birth of the “New Jew” in Argentina
*Los Gauchos Judíos/ The Jewish Gauchos of the pampas, Alberto Gerchunoff.

November 22: Follows Thursday, no class

November 29: Session 10
Varieties of the Jewish Immigration experience in Latin America
Jeffrey Lesser and Raanan Rein, “Introduction” and “New Approaches to Ethnicity and Diaspora in Twentieth-Century Latin America pp1-40

Jeffrey Lesser, “How the Jews became Japanese and other Stories of nation and Ethnicity”
*Jewish History* 18.1 2004 pp7-17
http://www.jstor.org/stable/20100921


Margalit Bejarano, “Sephardic Jews in Cuba—From all their Habitations,” *Judaism*, winter 2002

Jerry Davila, “Ethnicity, Identity and Nationality in Latin America”
*Jewish History* 18.1 2004 pp95-113
http://www.jstor.org/stable/20100925

Optional:
http://www.jstor.org/stable/163603


December 6:Session 11
*Novia que te vea*. Film by Guita Schyfter, based on the novel by Rosa Nissán (México 1994).

Paulette Kershenovich
*Evoking the Essence of the Divine: The Construction of Identity through Food in the Syrian Jewish Community in Mexico* (pp. 105-128)
*Nashim* No. 5, Fall, 5763/2002
*Feeding an Identity: Gender, Food, and Survival*
http://www.jstor.org/stable/40326555
Evelyn Dean-Olmsted  
*Shamis, halebis and shajatos: Labels and the dynamics of Syrian Jewishness in Mexico City*

*Language & Communication*  
**Volume 31, Issue 2**, May 2011, Pages 130-140  
**Jewish Languages in the Age of the Internet**

Isaac Berliner, “Churches” (Poem illustrated by Diego Rivera), *Yiddish South of the Border* pp156-158

December 13: Session 12  
**Fractured Lenses**  
1- 89

December 20: Session 13  
**Fractured Lenses (Part II)**  
*The Fragmented Life of Don Jacobo Lerner* contd.  
90- 186  
*Isaac Goldenberg, “Life in Installments” from King David’s Harp pp. 143- 158*

December 27: Session 14  
**J.L. Borges: Jews and Judaism within Modernity’s Labyrinth**  

PDF on angel  
*Borges y la kabala* http://youtu.be/N7vvdFB7c5s

January 3: Session 15  
“*This is good, but it tasted better in Cuba*”

*Adiò Kerida*, a film by Ruth Behar

** “While waiting for the ferry to Cuba: Afterthoughts about Adio Kerida”**  
Ruth Behar *Michigan Quarterly Review;* Fall 2002; 41, 4; Research Library pg. 655

***Martí in Yiddish**  
http://www.chcuba.org/espanol/vida_comunitaria/interesante/marti%20y%20los%20hebreos.htm

”Mi tierra”, Gloria Estéfan, “El danzón de Moises”, Roberto Rodrigúez [In class audio recordings]