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Office Hours by Appointment

Jews at the University of Michigan: Exclusion and Inclusion in Higher Education

Judaic Studies 441 / AmCult 405.003 / History 468.002 / SW 513.001

Tuesday, 2-5 PM, 2320 SEB, Winter 2017

Course Description:

When most elite private colleges and universities in the Northeast imposed quotas during the 1920s on the percentage of Jewish students on campus, Michigan became an attractive destination for children of East Coast immigrant families, establishing a long tradition of a strong national Jewish student presence at the University. The University of Michigan has thus served as an important locus of Americanization and for the development of American Jewish culture.

Despite the historic and contemporary significance of Jewish presence at and contributions to the University of Michigan, very little has been written about the Michigan Jewish experience. This seminar provides students with the opportunity to contribute to a developing narrative of Jewish experience at the University of Michigan.

Class readings and discussions will focus on the history of Jews in American higher education, the history of the University, and the research and presentation tools necessary to gather and share the stories of Jews at the University. Class research projects will focus on the 1930s; potential themes include fraternity/sorority life, Hillel, campus activism, faculty and student experience, the extent to which U-M replicated the exclusionary admissions practices of Eastern elite schools, exclusions and quotas in specific departments and professional schools, religious expression, acculturation and assimilation, anti-Semitism, Jewish philanthropy, and the evolution of Judaic Studies, among other subjects. Research projects will be developed in cooperation with the staff and draw upon the resources of the Bentley Historical Library.

Course Objectives:

Completion of this course will result in the ability of students to:

1. Understand how attempts to exclude or incorporate Jews in American colleges and universities shaped higher education in the United States.
2. Develop research skills to gather and analyze primary sources around particular themes in the history of the way that Jews entered Jews at the University of Michigan.

3. Transform primary source research into historical narratives that will contribute to the beginning of the documentation of the historical experience of Jews at the University of Michigan.
4. Develop shared class knowledge about the narrative of Jews in higher education and its intersection with the history of the University of Michigan.
5. Pose and address significant historical questions through creative research methodologies.
6. Think critically about the ways in which Universities open *and* restrict access to social and economic opportunity. Address the question of whether and how Universities preserve or challenge societal structures of privilege historically and today.
7. Contribute to the history of Jewish experience at the University of Michigan.

Required Texts, available for purchase:

Jerome Karabel, *The Chosen: The Hidden History of Admission and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton* (Mariner Books, 2005).

Andrei S. Markovits and Kenneth Garner, *Hillel at Michigan, 1926/27-1945: Struggles of Jewish identity in a Pivotal Era* (Michigan Publishing, Maize Books, 2016)

Required book, but optional purchase: Howard H. Peckham, *The Making of the University of Michigan, 1817-1992*, edited and updated by Margaret L. Steneck and Nicholas H. Steneck (University of Michigan, 1994). Also available on-line:

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=moaatxt;idno=ARR1483.0001.001>.

Student Responsibilities

This course will be conducted as a seminar and will require active student participation. Students should come prepared to ask questions, share insights, listen to the instructor and fellow students with full attention, and provide leadership in the classroom, within large and small groups. Specific reading assignments may shift to accommodate the needs and interests of the class and the schedules of guest speakers. Graduate students will be required to submit a longer final paper or one designed to address their particular academic or professional interests in consultation with the instructor.

If there are any special circumstances that I and/or the class should know to allow you to participate fully, please consult with me so that we can make appropriate adaptations.

All students are responsible for the highest level of academic integrity. Students must submit only their own work and cite all sources of ideas and information taken from other sources. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

Requirements:

Class Participation (200 points) The course will depend upon active participation from all students. This includes regular, prompt attendance. Please let me know if you must miss a class – students are responsible for material covered when they are absent, and more than three absences may result in a failing grade. Active participants offer informed, thoughtful contributions; listen carefully and respectfully; and ask probing, challenging questions of the instructor and each other. Students will be asked to discuss material from assigned or optional reading assignments and to speak about completed or prospective written assignments. *Results from short reading quizzes focused on central ideas, personalities, and events from the assigned reading will be incorporated into the grade for class participation.*

Students will conduct research on subjects related to the history of Jews at the University of Michigan during the 1930s. We will work together to develop a shared narrative of Jewish experience at the University of Michigan during this period, sharing sources and working collectively on specific areas of interest. Final class presentations will be part of the University of Michigan's Frankel Center for Judaic Studies' U-M bicentennial celebration.

Assignments for Submission:

Interview Assignment (50 points, January 27, 5 pm):

Conduct (and record) a short interview (10-15 minutes) with someone over the age of 70 about their perceptions and/or experiences of higher education. How relevant were questions of exclusion or inclusion of outsider groups (Jewish, Catholic, Black, Latino, Asian, disabilities, etc.) to your narrator? If your narrator went to college, what difference did it make for them? Submit a short overview of the interview and what you learned from the conversation (3-5 pages). What surprised you in what they shared? How does what they described differ from your own experience or understanding of college life and its opportunities? What questions did this conversation raise for you in framing relevant historical approaches or in thinking about your own experience as a student at the University of Michigan?

Library Exhibit report (50 points, 3-4 pages, due: February 25, 5 pm): Visit exhibit, *Striving to Stimulate Serious Thought* on Jewish academic and cultural life at the University of Michigan, on the 7th floor of the Hatcher Library (exhibit closes February 22). Provide overview of exhibit and its take on Jewish experience at Michigan or offer a close reading of one of the artifacts presented in the exhibit and its significance in explaining the history of Jews at the University. (<https://www.lib.umich.edu/events/striving-to-stimulate-serious-thought>)

Research Project:

(Shared class work: 100 points; Group Work: 100 points; Individual work: 500 points)

(Progress report deadlines = February 14, March 14)

(Student presentations: April 20 or TBD)

(Final work submitted: April 25, 5 pm)

Each student in this course will be a part of advancing the gathering and recording of the history of Jews at the University of Michigan. This project is the centerpiece of our course and will be much more than a quick archives immersion relegated to the end of the semester. Presentation of student projects will be a central part of the Frankel Center's U-M Bicentennial celebration.

We will spend considerable time on the different pieces that go into primary research projects, including accessing relevant archival collections and identifying topics for further study; compiling a bibliography of secondary sources; thinking about the appropriate presentation format, and testing out research questions and hypotheses, all in consultation with the class and instructor.

Topics will focus on Jewish experience at the University during the 1930s (overlap into surrounding decades is inevitable and fine). As a group, we will identify potential subjects for study, which may include learning more about the background, University experience, and future trajectory of Jewish students during the 1930s; Hillel, fraternities/sororities; faculty experience; and approaches to Jewish identity and anti-semitism (and emergence of Nazi Germany) during this period. Students will work in clusters on some of these topics. Final projects may take different forms including (but not limited to) research papers (15-20 pages); museum exhibit presentations; oral histories; or on-line media exhibits.

Archival Collections: We will be working closely with staff and resources of the [BENTLEY HISTORICAL LIBRARY](#) which we will visit as a class on January 24 and February 24. Examples of collections within the Bentley that could lead to rich research journeys include:

William Haber Papers (professor of economics, Dean of U-M LSA, and Jewish communal leader); I. Leo Scharfman papers (professor of economics, founder of the Menorah Society at Harvard, faculty supporter of Jewish initiatives at Michigan); Ira Smith (registrar) papers; Office of the Registrar records; records relating to Hillel and to fraternity and sorority life on campus; and alumni files.

Relevant publications include: the [Michigan Daily News](#), *Michiganensian*, *Michigan Alumnus Magazine* and other U-Michigan Publications, as well as the *Menorah Journal*, Hillel publications, *Ann Arbor News*, *Detroit Jewish News*, *Detroit Free Press*, etc. Newly available on-

line access to the [Detroit Jewish Chronicle](#) (1916-1951); [The Michigan Daily News](#); and [The Michiganian](#) will greatly enhance our ability to access and highlight these stories.

Class sessions:

January 10: Historical Frameworks and Introduction to Archivists and Primary Sources

January 17: Admissions Restrictions and Quotas

Jerome Karabel, *The Chosen: The Hidden History of Admission and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton* (2005), pp. 39-136.

Howard H. Peckham, (updated by Margaret L. and Nicholas H. Steneck) *The Making of the University of Michigan, 1817-1992* (1994), skim for relevant context: pp. 99 – 154.

Harry Starr, "The Affair at Harvard: What the Students Did," *The Menorah Journal*, vol. 8., October 1922, pp. 263-276:

<http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015005249126;view=1up;seq=297>.

(accessible on-line through Mirlyn).

January 24: Bentley Library introduction to archival collections.

Meet at 1150 Beal Ave., North Campus.

[begin: Andrei S. Markovits and Kenneth Garner, *Hillel At Michigan, 1926/27-1945: Struggles of Jewish Identity in a Pivotal Era* (2016)]

January 31: Insiders/Outsiders within Student Life

Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, (1987), "Outsiders: The Loyal Opposition," pp. 56-81.

Daniel Greene, *The Jewish Origins of Cultural Pluralism: The Menorah Association and American Diversity* (2011), pp. 14-62.

Marianne Sanua, "Jewish College Fraternities in the U.S., 1895-1945: An Overview." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 19, no. 2 (Winter 2000): 1-42.

Peckham, 155-190.

Hillel At Michigan, 1926/27-1945: pp. 13-127

February 7: Anti-Semitism, the 1930s, World War II

Jonathan Z.S. Pollack, "Jewish Problems: Eastern and Western Jewish Identities in Conflict at the University of Wisconsin," *American Jewish History* 89:2 (June 2001): 161-180.

Robert Shaffer, "Jews, Reds, and Violets: Anti-Semitism and Anti-Radicalism at NYU, 1916-1929," *Journal of Ethnic Studies*, 15 (1987): 47-83.

Shira Kohn, "A Gentlewoman's Agreement: Jewish Sororities in Postwar America, 1947-1964," NYU Dissertation, 2013, pp. 123-163.

Karabel, 166-199 [optional: 200-247]

Peckham, 193-243.

Hillel at Michigan, 127-214.

Optional: Wechsler, Harold. "The Rationale for Restriction: Ethnicity and College Admissions in America, 1910-1980." *American Quarterly* 36 (Winter 1984): 643-667.

February 14: Faculty and Departments (discussion of research topics)

Lewis S. Feuer, "The Stages in the Social History of Jewish Professors in American Colleges and Universities," *American Jewish History* 71 (June 1982).

Susanne Klingenstein, *Jews in the American Academy, 1900-1940* (1991), "Three Professors of Philosophy."

February 21: Research Day at the Bentley, 1150 Beal Ave., North Campus

March 7: Professional Schools

Henry D. Fetter, "Meritocracy and Its Limits: Harvard, Yale and Columbia Law Schools before the Second World War" in Eunice G. Pollack, ed., *Anti-Semitism on Campus: Past and Present* (2011).

Edward C. Halperin, "The Jewish Problem in US Medical Education, 1920-1955," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 56:2(2001).

March 14: Post War 1950s.

Anthony W. James, "The College Social Fraternity Antidiscrimination Debate, 1945-1949." *The Historian* 62 (January 2000).

Shira Kohn, "A Gentlewoman's Agreement: Jewish Sororities in Postwar America, 1947-1964," NYU Dissertation, 2013, pp. 159-193.

Karabel, 248-345.

David Hollinger, "Academic Culture at the University of Michigan, 1938-1988," in *Science, Jews and Secular Culture* (1996), 121-154.

Peckham, "Hatcher and the Challenges of the Cold War," 245-266.

March 21: 1960s and New Left

James Miller, "*Democracy is in the Streets*": *From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago*, pp. 21-61, 157-183.

Michael Kazin, "Not with my Life, You Don't, 1950s-1980s," *American Dreamers: How the Left Changed a Nation*, pp. 209 -235.

Karabel, Chap 12, 349-409.

Peckham, the 1960s: 267-288.

March 28: Affirmative Action and Campus Multiculturalism

"Affirmative Action, Jewish Ideals, Jewish Interests," and "Affirmative Action, African American and Jewish Perspectives," in Salzman and West, eds., *Struggles in the Promised Land*, (New York, 1997), pp. 295-316 and 323-334.

Jeffrey, S. Lehman, "The Evolving Language of Diversity and Integration in Discussions of Affirmative Action from Bakke to Grutter," in Patricia Gurin et. al., eds., *Defending Diversity; Affirmative Action at the University of Michigan*, (Ann Arbor, 2004).

David Biale, Michael Galchinsky, Susannah Heschel, eds., *Insider/Outsider: American Jews and Multiculturalism* (Berkeley, 1998), excerpts.

Karabel, p. 483-513

Peckham, 325-354.

April 4: Judaic Studies and Jewish Philanthropy

Paul Ritterband and Harold S. Wechsler, *Jewish Learning in American Universities: The First Century (1994)*, 172-215.

Todd Endelman, "A History of the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan."

Karabel, 514-557.

April 11: no class, Passover (make up **April 20?**)

April 18: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Today

Karabel, "The Battle over Merit," 536-558.

Peckham, 357-360.

"Why American Colleges are Becoming a Force for Inequality," *The Atlantic*, May 16, 2013.

Current articles

TBD (April 20?): Presentation of Student Work and Frankel Center Bicentennial Event

How have we changed the narrative?