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Office Hours by Appointment

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

Judaic Studies 441 / AmCult 405-012 / History 468-004 / SW 513-001

Tuesday, 2-5 PM, 2346 SEB, Winter 2020

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 the opportunity to learn about and 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. We will hope to find meaningful chronological and thematic overlap in the selection of topics for final research projects. Potential themes include radical student culture; 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, constructions of Jewish identity at the University; acculturation and assimilation, examination of socio-economic of U-M Jewish students during the 1930s; 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 insight into 20-21st-century American Jewish experience via lens of Jews in higher education.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Develop shared class knowledge about the narrative of Jews in higher education and its intersection with the history of the University of Michigan.
6. Pose and address significant historical questions through creative research methodologies.
7. 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.
8. 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).

On-line: 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) [available on-line]

On-line : 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): <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. We will work together to develop research topics and 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, 10 pm):

Conduct (and record) a short interview (10-15 minutes, using [Story Aperture app](#) from the Jewish Women's Archive) 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 the recording of the interview, 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?

Michigan Daily archive report (150 points, 3-5pages, February 24, 5 pm): Find an article or articles from the [digitized Michigan Daily](#) related to the larger research topic you intend to explore. Offer a close reading of the article(s) you choose while providing or identifying the larger historical context needed to understand the content/point of view/significance of the article(s).

Research Project (600 points)

Preparatory Work (100 points): in-class and/or written updates, February 14, March 14

Student presentations (100 points): April 14

Final project (400 points): April 27, 10 pm. (I will extend this to April 28 -- latest date I can offer and still get grades in on time).

Drafts submitted by April 17 will receive careful written feedback within one week.

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. There will be public presentation of student research, sponsored by the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, on April 14 (Thayer 2000) during class time.

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 fellow students and the instructor. 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; radical campus activism and its perceived (and actual) overlap with Jewish students; Hillel; fraternities/sororities; faculty experience; approaches to Jewish identity and antisemitism (and emergence of Nazi Germany); and emergence of Israel and Israel politics. 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); 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; Student Christian Association papers (containing records related to religion on campus); records relating to Hillel and to fraternity and sorority life; and alumni files. Relevant publications include: *Michigan Alumnus Magazine* and other U-Mi 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 Michiganansian](#) will greatly enhance our ability to access and highlight these stories.

Class sessions:

January 14: Historical Frameworks and Introduction to Archivists and Primary Sources

January 21: Admissions Restrictions and Quotas

Jerome Karabel, *The Chosen: The Hidden History of Admission and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton* (2005), pp. 39-110.

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 online through Mirlyn).

January 28: Bentley Library introduction to archival collections.

Meet at 1150 Beal Ave., North Campus.

[read: Andrei S. Markovits and Kenneth Garner, *Hillel At Michigan, 1926/27-1945: Struggles of Jewish Identity in a Pivotal Era* (2016), pp. 13-127:

- [The Early Years under Foundation Director Adolph Fink](#)
- [Exit Adolph Fink, Enter Bernard Heller](#)
- [Exit Bernard Heller, Enter Isaac Rabinowitz](#) (for this week, read through to subheading: "Exit Bernard Heller, Enter Isaac Rabinowitz")

February 4: 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.

February 11: Anti-Semitism, the 1930s, World War II

Heywood Broun and George Britt, *Christians Only: A Study in Prejudice* (1931), pp. 72-124.

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.

Shira Kohn, "Turning German Jews into Jewish Greeks: Philanthropy and Acculturation in the Jewish Greek System's Student Refugee Programs, 1936-1940," *American Jewish History* 102:4 (October 2018), pp. 511-536.

Karabel, 166-199

Hillel at Michigan, 127-214 ("Exit Bernard Heller, Enter Isaac Rabinowitz" - the end).

Peckham, 193-243 (optional)

February 18: 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).

Andrew S. Winston, "'Objectional Traits,' Antisemitism and the Hiring of Jewish Psychologists, 1920-1950," in Eunice G. Pollack, ed., *Anti-Semitism on Campus: Past and Present* (2011), pp. 94-113.

David Hollinger, "Jewish Intellectuals and the De-Christianization of American Public Culture in the Twentieth Century," in Hollinger, *Science, Jews and Secular Culture* (1996), pp. 17-33.

David Hollinger, "Why are Jews Preeminent in Science and Scholarship? The Veblen Thesis Reconsidered," in Hollinger, *Cosmopolitanism and Solidarity* (2006), pp. 135-153.

optional: (it would be useful to look just at the charts in this article): Stephen Steinberg, *The Academic Melting Pot: Catholics and Jews in American Higher Education* (1974) pp. 117-130.

February 25: Research Day at the Bentley, 1150 Beal Ave., North Campus

March 10: 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 17: 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. (read just one chapter of these three: *either* on Yale, Harvard, or Princeton)

optional: 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 24: 1960s and New Left with guest SDS founder Alan Haber

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

optional: Karabel, Chap 12, 349-409.

Peckham, the 1960s: 267-288.

March 31: Affirmative Action and Campus Multiculturalism

Karabel, p. 363-392 and 483-499

Peckham, 289-295, 309-318, 343-350.

optional:

"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).

April 7: Judaic Studies and Jewish Philanthropy with guest Professor Zvi Gitelman

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

optional: Karabel, 514-557.

April 14: Public presentation of research

How have we changed the narrative? Student research on Jews at Michigan, Thayer 2000.

April 21: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion today with guest Regent Mark Bernstein

optional: Karabel, pp. 536-557

Diversity (or its lack) at Michigan:

Michigan Daily: <https://www.michigandaily.com/section/viewpoints/op-ed-2> (Links to an external site.)

The Atlantic: <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/03/the-university-of-michigans-slow-painful-plan-to-increase-diversity/519903/> (Links to an external site.)

New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/college-mobility/university-of-michigan-ann-arbor> (Links to an external site.)

Controversy over Bernstein/Bendit Trotter House:

<http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2016/07/21/mark-berstein-university-of-michigan/87398126/> (Links to an external site.)

Choose one of these three groups of readings:

1. More on Access and Affordability:

“College Made Them Feel Equal. The Virus Exposed How Unequal They

Are: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/04/us/politics/coronavirus-zoom-college-classes.html?searchResultPosition=1> (Links to an external site.)

Interactive study of economic status of students at different American colleges and universities: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/01/18/upshot/some-colleges-have-more-students-from-the-top-1-percent-than-the-bottom-60.html> (Links to an external site.)

The Determinants of Income Segregation and Intergenerational Mobility Across Colleges: Using Test Scores to Measure

Undermatching: https://opportunityinsights.org/wpcontent/uploads/2020/02/coll_undermatch_exec_summary.pdf (Links to an external site.)

2. Campus Israel Politics and Trump’s executive order

“The Limits of Hostility: Students Report on Antisemitism and Anti-Israel Sentiment at Four US Universities”: <https://www.brandeis.edu/ssri/noteworthy/fourcampuses.html> (Links to an external site.)

BDS and Trump Executive Order on Antisemitism:

Executive Order: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-combating-anti-semitism/> (Links to an external site.)

Definition of Antisemitism referenced in the Executive

Order: <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/stories/working-definition-antisemitism> (Links to an external site.)

From “The Daily” in the *New York Times*: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/18/podcasts/the-daily/anti-semitism.html?searchResultPosition=2> (Links to an external site.)

Michigan Daily: <https://www.michigandaily.com/section/academics/u-professors-see-executive-order-anti-semitism-challenge-academic-freedom> (Links to an external site.)

3. Diversity: lawsuit at Harvard re: Asian-American admissions and position of Jews on campuses

Judge’s 9/30/19 ruling in the case:

<https://int.nyt.com/data/documenthelper/1865-harvard-admissions-process/fcb2b57c15f154b139df/optimized/full.pdf#page=1> (Links to an external site.)

NYT articles on judge’s ruling on Harvard Asian American Case

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/02/us/takeaways-harvard-ruling-admissions.html> (Links to an external site.)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/01/us/harvard-admissions-lawsuit.html?searchResultPosition=1> (Links to an external site.)

“How Hard is it to Be a Jew on Campus” (2008):

<http://bir.brandeis.edu/bitstream/handle/10192/23260/CJ02kadush.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y> (Links to an external site.)