JWST – Spring 2027 Course Descriptions

- HBRW 1020 – 3 sections (all same)
    - This is the second part of an introductory course in Modern Hebrew. You will continue to develop your skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, expanding your vocabulary and your ability to communicate in everyday situations. By the end of the course, you will be able to participate more confidently in contemporary Hebrew conversations and understand increasingly complex spoken and written texts. Through language learning, you will also explore aspects of Israeli culture and society and deepen your cultural understanding. The course is intended for students who have completed the first semester of Elementary Hebrew or have equivalent basic knowledge of Hebrew.
- HBRW 2030
    - This course builds practical Hebrew skills through authentic language, contemporary Israeli culture, and everyday communication. Students will develop their ability to understand and use Hebrew in a variety of real-world situations while expanding their vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Through conversations, short readings, videos, and other authentic materials, you will explore how Hebrew is used in Israeli society and culture. Class activities will give you opportunities to communicate with others and build confidence using Hebrew beyond the classroom. You will also learn to develop strategies for understanding unfamiliar words by using the language rules. By connecting language learning with contemporary topics and cultural perspectives, the course encourages curiosity and a deeper understanding of the language and the culture. The skills you develop can support further study of Hebrew as well as communication in academic, social, travel, and professional settings.This course is designed for students who have completed beginners level of Hebrew or students that have Hebrew background and are ready to become more comfortable and independent Hebrew speakers, readers, and writers.
- HBRW 2130 – 2 sections (both same)
    - This course builds practical Hebrew skills through authentic language, contemporary Israeli culture, and everyday communication. Students will develop their ability to understand and use Hebrew in a variety of real-world situations while expanding their vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Through conversations, short readings, videos,

and other authentic materials, you will explore how Hebrew is used in Israeli society and culture. Class activities will give you opportunities to communicate with others and build confidence using Hebrew beyond the classroom. You will also learn to develop strategies for understanding unfamiliar words by using the language rules. By connecting language learning with contemporary topics and cultural perspectives, the course encourages curiosity and a deeper understanding of the language and the culture. The skills you develop can support further study of Hebrew as well as communication in academic, social, travel, and professional settings. This course is designed for students who have completed beginners level of Hebrew or students that have Hebrew background and are ready to become more comfortable and independent Hebrew speakers, readers, and writers.

- HBRW 3100
    - Final part of Hebrew language learning. You will continue to develop your skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, expanding your vocabulary and your ability to communicate in everyday situations. By the end of the course, you will be able to participate more confidently in contemporary Hebrew conversations and understand increasingly complex spoken and written texts.
- JWST 1010
    - JWST 1010 tells the story of the Jews in summary through 18 classics of Jewish literature, from the Bible to the founding of the state of Israel. Several important contemporary issues are also included.
- JWST 1020 – 2 sections (both same)
    - Explore the dramatic transformations of Jewish life from the early modern period to the present. Through history, literature, film, art, personal writings, and political texts, we will examine how Jewish communities across the world responded to emancipation, migration, nationalism, antisemitism, the Holocaust, and the challenges of modern identity. Along the way, we will ask how Jews shaped modern culture and how modernity reshaped what it meant to be Jewish. No previous knowledge of Judaism or Jewish history is required.
- JWST 2100 – 2 sections (both same)
    - How did a collection of ancient stories, laws, poems, and prophecies become one of the most influential works ever written? Explore the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh/Old Testament) as literature rooted in the history and cultures of the ancient Near East. We will investigate creation and flood myths, family sagas, conquest, kingship, prophecy, love poetry, and debates about

suffering and justice—often alongside texts from Egypt and Mesopotamia. You will learn to read familiar and unfamiliar passages with new eyes while developing skills in historical analysis and critical interpretation. No prior knowledge is required.

- JWST 3100 – Great Myths of Ancient World
    - What can some of the world's oldest surviving stories tell us about love, death, power, gender, friendship, and the desire to be remembered? In this course, you will explore the great myths of ancient Mesopotamia and Canaan, including the Epic of Gilgamesh, creation and flood stories, tales of goddesses and heroes, and the myths of Baal. We will trace their influence on the Hebrew Bible and later traditions while asking why stories written thousands of years ago still feel immediate. Through lively discussion, creative work, and critical analysis, you will become a stronger reader, writer, and interpreter of literature and culture. No prior knowledge is required.
- JWST 3440
    - How do survivors and their descendants tell the story of catastrophe? How does that story change across generations? This course examines diaries, memoirs, fiction, film, comics, and testimony documenting the Holocaust and its aftermath, exploring how trauma, memory, and meaning are shaped and reshaped over time. Reading works like Wiesel's Night and Spiegelman's Maus alongside scholarship on gender, sexuality, and cultural memory, you'll develop tools for interpreting difficult histories through literary and visual analysis, skills that translate directly to work in museums and public history, cultural institutions, Jewish communal leadership, psychology, social work, and film studies.
- JWST 4430
    - In 1881, most of the world's Jews lived under Tsarist rule. Within decades, they'd scattered across the globe—to New York, Buenos Aires, Johannesburg, Melbourne. Why there? Why not somewhere else? This seminar traces Jewish migration as a truly global story, comparing how immigrant communities took root, adapted, and built economic lives, from peddling to the garment trade to the Gold Rush. You'll debate what made the Jewish experience unique—and what it shared with Irish, Chinese, and Mexican immigrants navigating the same currents. Discussion-driven, globally minded, and endlessly relevant to today's migration debates.