The course provides a broad (but selective) survey of Jewish religious thought and practice from the biblical period through the modern. Readings focus on the way diverse Jewish thinkers have reshaped Jewish identity by reconfiguring the way in which they imagine the divine, interpret texts, and structure community. We pay particular attention to how Jewish interpreters have constructed a changing textual tradition as an integral part of that process. This class introduces students to the Hebrew Bible, Talmud and Midrash, medieval philosophy and mysticism, and to German Jewish existentialism and American Jewish feminism in the 20th century. Special note is paid to the modern period and the role of women.

Texts: (available at bookstore):
TANAKH (Hebrew/"Old Testament") (at bookstore or bring your own)
Friedman, Who Wrote the Bible?
Michael Brenner, A Short History of the Jews
Heschel, The Sabbath
Plaskow, Standing Again at Sinai
Course Reader (#1002 at Campus Copies @ Marshall Sq. Mall)

Books held on Reserve at Byrd Library:
Milgrom commentary on Leviticus.
Hyam Maccobi, Ritual and Morality
Neusner, Judaism: The Evidence of the Mishnah
Neusner, Ancient Israel After Catastrophe

Requirements:
Active class participation
1 page weekly critique of course readings (due Tues) (mandatory, but not for grade)
3 take-home writing exercises (5 pages each)
take-home class final exam essay
All written work for credit is to be submitted by hardcopy to the instructors and electronically to “Turnitin”

INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASS
8/30 (no assignment)

THE HEBREW BIBLE
9/1 Family Saga:
Bible: Genesis chapters 12, 16-22, 27-35
Francine Klagsburn, "Ruth and Naomi, Rachel and Leah" in *Reading Ruth* in COURSE READER

9/6 Liberation, Revelation, & Law
Bible: Exodus chapters 1-23, 35
Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?*, p.33-49, 86-8

9/8 Priests and Cult
Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?*, p.188-92 & 196-8 & 201-2

9/13 Covenant & Prophecy
Deuteronomy chapters 27, 28, 30. Jeremiah chapters 1, 7, 11, 17, 31

**RABBIANIC JUDAISM**

9/15 Rabbinic history:
   Brenner, chps.3-5; TBA

9/20 Rabbinic texts: Talmud
   TBA
   Selections from Bava Kama in COURSE READER

   **** 1st PAPER DUE ****

9/22 Rabbinic texts: Talmud
   A.J. Heschel, *God in Search of Man* in COURSE READER
   Selections from Shabbat in COURSE READER

9/27 Rabbinic texts: Midrash
   TBA
   Neusner, “Genesis and Genesis Rabbah” in *The Midrash: An Introduction* in COURSE READER
   Selections from Genesis Rabbah in COURSE READER

9/29 NO CLASS: ROSH HA-SHANAH

10/4 Themes in rabbinic literature: Revelation
   Scholem, Gershom “Revelation and Tradition” in *The Messianic Idea in Judaism* in COURSE READER
   Selections on Rabbinic Theology in COURSE READER

10/6 Themes in rabbinic literature: Politics
   Rachel Adler, "The Jew Who Wasn't There" in *On Being a Jewish Feminist*
   in COURSE READER
   Selections on Rabbinic Politics in COURSE READER

**MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY & MYSTICISM**

10/11 Introduction to medieval Judaism
   Brenner, chps. 6-7, TBA

10/13 NO CLASS: SUKKOT
10/18 Philosophy: God and the Hebrew Bible:
   TBA
   Maimonides, Guide of the Perplexed, material on “God” in COURSE READER
   *** 2nd PAPER DUE TODAY ***

10/20 NO CLASS: SHEMINI ATZERET

10/25 Philosophy: The Commandments
   Maimonides, material on “Law” in COURSE READER

10/27 Mysticism: The Structure of God
   Seltzer, Jewish People, Jewish Thought, pp.419-50 in COURSE READER
   Selections from Zohar, "Account of the Chariot" in COURSE READER

11/1 Mysticism: The Commandments
   Selections from Zohar, "Sabbath & Holidays" in COURSE READER
   Arthur Green, "Bride, Spouse, Daughter" in On Being a Jewish Feminist in COURSE READER

MODERN JUDAISM (I): 19th CENTURY ORIGINS OF JEWISH MODERNITY

11/3 Emancipation:
   Brenner, chps.8-11
   *** 3rd PAPER DUE ***

11/8 Reform Judaism
   Brenner, chps. 12-13
   Abraham Geiger in COURSE READER

11/10 Modern Orthodox Judaism
   Samson Raphael Hirsch in COURSE READER
   Conservative Judaism
   Zecharias Frankel in The Jew in the Modern World in COURSE READER

11/15 Jewish Prayer and Modernity
   The Siddur in COURSE READER
   Reuven Hammer, Entering Jewish Prayer, chp.9 in COURSE READER

MODERN JUDAISM (II): 20th CENTURY JEWISH THOUGHT AND CULTURE

11/17 Kaplan: selection from Judaism as a Civilization in COURSE READER

11/22-11/24 THANKSGIVING BREAK

11/29 Heschel, The Sabbath

12/1 Plaskow, Standing Again at Sinai, chapter 2

12/6 Plaskow, Standing Again at Sinai, chps. 3-4

12/8 Greenberg, selections from On Women and Judaism and Hartman, A Living Covenant in COURSE READER

FINAL EXAM: TAKE HOME ESSAY, DUE LAST DAY OF EXAM WEEK