Instructor: Dr. Nina Caputo  
Time/Place: MWF Period 5, Keene-Flint 117  
Office Hours: 1:00-2:00 MW, and by appointment  
Office Location: 025 Keene-Flint Hall (in the main History Dept. office)  
Phone: 273-3379  
Email: ncaputo@ufl.edu  

Course description: This course will survey major historic developments in medieval Jewish society under both Islam and western Christendom. We will look at the divergence of Judaism and Christianity, the rise of the Babylonian geonim, the social and cultural history of Jews in the Arab Mediterranean world, the emergence of Jewish communities in Medieval Ashkenaz, and the impact on Jewish society of the Crusades, the Reconquista, the emergence of the mendicant orders, and the Black Death. In the lectures, readings and assignments, students will examine the interaction of Jews with the majority culture, political structure, and economy, as well as changing cultural trends within Jewish society. The distinctive religious climate of the medieval period will serve as a unifying theme throughout. We will study primary sources as well as recent historical scholarship.

University of Florida GatorLink Email: Class announcements will be sent out to your gatormail accounts via the classrolls mailing list. Check your GatorLink email account on a regular basis; you will be held responsible for all amendments to reading or writing assignments posted there. 'I don’t check my GatorLink account’ will not be considered a valid excuse for failure to complete an assignment or follow instructions.

Written assignments: Historical writing demands that you make your arguments in a clear and precise manner and that you back them up with historical evidence. Thus, written assignments will be graded on the basis of style as well as content. Completion of the written assignments is absolutely required. Late assignments will not be accepted without penalty. Please make every effort to apprise the instructor of adverse circumstances that affect your ability to attend class or complete assignments on time. Official documentation is required to excuse an absence and to schedule make-up assignments. Unless otherwise noted, assignments will be collected at the end of the precept session for which they are assigned. Do not submit your work to via email – written work must be presented in hard-copy.

Reading assignments: You will likely find yourself frustrated and confused during the lectures if you do not make a good faith effort to finish the reading assignments before the class meetings. If you find yourself falling behind in the readings, I suggest you at least skim
the texts for each week before lectures so you are familiar with the themes and issues addressed on that day.

**Attendance:** Students are expected to attend class regularly and arrive for lecture promptly. A penalty will be imposed on students who arrive late for class. Attendance is mandatory. Unexcused absences will be penalized in the following manner: you will be permitted absence over the course of the term; every absence thereafter will lower your grade by one third.

In writing papers, be certain to give proper credit whenever you use words, phrases, ideas, arguments, and conclusions drawn from someone else’s work. Failure to give credit by quoting and/or footnoting is PLAGIARISM and will not be accepted in this class because it violates the University of Florida’s honesty policy. Please review the policy at [http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/).

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office ([http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp/)). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Please turn off your cell phones. If your cell phone rings or if you spend your time texting, you will be asked to leave the class and this will count as an unexcused absence.

**Online Course Evaluation Process:** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at [https://evaluations.ufl.edu](https://evaluations.ufl.edu). Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at [https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results](https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results).

**Grade Distribution and Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation – 10%</th>
<th>100 - 93</th>
<th>74 - 71</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First paper – 20%</td>
<td>92 - 90</td>
<td>70 - 67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second paper – 25%</td>
<td>89 - 87</td>
<td>66 - 63</td>
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<tr>
<td>First exam – 20%</td>
<td>86 - 83</td>
<td>62 - 60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second exam – 25%</td>
<td>82 - 79</td>
<td>59 – 56</td>
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<td>78 – 75</td>
<td>below 55</td>
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**Participation:** History classes are most rewarding when students interact with the texts, each other, and the instructor on a sustained basis. Readings provide the raw material for class discussion, where much of the learning takes place. Effective class participation is therefore essential. Students can expect a respectful atmosphere in which to express their opinions. Participation will be graded on: a) contribution to in-class discussion based on a careful reading of the assigned texts; b) Regular and prompt attendance. You will be permitted three ‘free-be’ absences over the course of the term; every absence thereafter will lower your grade by one third. If you spend your time in class engaged with other activities – like texting – your participation grade will also suffer.

**Note:** A grade of C- is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF’s Grading Policy, see: [https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx](https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx) - minusgrades. [https://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html](https://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html)

**Required Books:** The following books are required for this course. They are available through various online distributors or directly through the presses’ websites.


Lawrence Fine, *Judaism in Practice: From the Middle Ages through the Early Modern Period* (Princeton University Press, 2001)

Weekly Schedule:
* Color codes: green means that the reading can be found in the files; purple indicates a link to an external site; and black indicates an assigned book.

I 4-6 January
**Introduction: Beginnings**

**READINGS:**
http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/TalmudPage.html
http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/361_Transp/T05_Shema_sources.html
http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/361_Transp/T04_Prayer_structure.html
Josephus, *Jewish Wars* (Book 6, read chapters 8-10)
Fine, 1-36, 39-48 (text #5)

II 9-13 January
**Shared Roots, Contested Authority**

**READINGS:**
Cohen, 4-29
Strabo *The Geography*
Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands* xxiii-xxv (Chronological Table) 3-21, 149-151

III 16-20 January
**No class 16 January, MLK Day**

**Jewish Life and Culture Under Islam: Legal and Communal Foundations**

**READINGS:**
Stillman *The Jews of Arab Lands* 22-39; 113-136; 152-162
Saadya Gaon, excerpts from *Book of Beliefs and Opinions*
Fine, 229-236
Cohen, 111-120

IV 23-27 January

**Jewish Life and Culture Under Islam: Legal and Communal Foundations**

**Extra Credit**, "The Cairo Geniza and the Lost Arabic Archives", a talk by Marina Rustow

**Wednesday, 25 January** - No Class. Optional workshop with Marina Rustow

**READINGS:**
Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands* 165-183, 200-206, 210-211
Cohen, 52-74
Rustow, "Formal and Informal Patronage Among Jewish in the Islamic East: Evidence from the Cairo Geniza" in *Al-Qantara* vol. 29, no. 2 (2008), 341-382

V 30 January-3 February

**Jewish Life and Culture Under Islam: Economy**

**READINGS:**
Cohen, 88-103

VI 6-10 February

**Jewish Life and Culture Under Islam: Culture and Literature**

**First Paper, Due 8 February**

**READINGS:**
Fine, 413-428
Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands*, 211-251
Cohen, 131-136, 145-169

VII 13-17 February

**Monday, 13 February, Midterm**

**Early Christianity and the Jews**

**READINGS:**
Cohen, 30-51
Paul’s Epistle to the Hebrews, Epistle to the Romans, chapters 9-10
Augustine, The City of God, Book XVII, ch. 46
John Chrysostom, Homily Against the Jews, IV
Later Roman Law
Toldot Yeshu

VIII 20-24 February
Jews in Medieval Latin Christendom: Settlement in Western Europe
Cohen, 77-88, 107-111
Charlemagne’s Capitulary for the Jews
Agobard of Lyon, On the Insolence of the Jews
Jewish Trade
Charter of Speyer

IX 27 February -3 March
Jews in Medieval Latin Christendom: Culture and Religion
Fine, 115-130, 191-202

X 6-10 March
Spring Break

XI 13-17 March
The Crusades: Impact and Responses
Fine 438-452
Christian Accounts

XII 20-24 March
Jewish-Christian Relations: Mutual Perceptions and Cultural Encounters
Cohen, 121-131
Gilbert Crispin: http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/12jewschristian-2views.html

XIII 27-31 March
Jewish-Christian Relations: Mutual Perceptions and Cultural Encounters

XIV 3-7 April
Shifts in the Legal Status of European Jewry
Second Paper - Due 7 April
Fine, 429-437
Pope Innocent III, Constitution for the Jews
Fourth Lateran Council, in Debating Truths

XV 10-14 April
Jewish-Christian Dialogue
Caputo and Clarke, Debating Truth
XVI 17-19 April
The Case of Late-Medieval Spain
Cohen, 169-199
Nirenberg "Mass Conversion"
Limpieza de Sangre
Synod of Castilian Jews
Edict of Expulsion
Account of Expulsion
Final exam April 27, 10:00 am  April 27, 10:00 am