Program: CET Prague
Course Title: Jews and Anti-Semitism in a Multi-Ethnic Society
Course Code: PR/JWST 358
Total Hours: 45
Recommended Credits: 3
Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Jewish Studies / History, Political Science
Language of Instruction: English
Prerequisites/Requirements: Open to all students in the fall only

Description
The course explores the history of Jews in the multi-ethnic setting of the Bohemian (or Czech) Lands. The course guides students through different aspects of the cohabitation of the Jewish minority with Czechs and Germans, with a focus on the “long 19th century” (the period between the enlightenment and WWI).

One of the major questions addressed is the influence of the intensifying nationality conflict between Czechs and Germans on the course of modern Jewish history in this region. The interpretations of the historiography vary. Some contemporaries or historians offer very dire descriptions of how Jews were inevitably caught between the fronts of the Czech-German conflict. Others stress the Jewish cultural productivity as double outsiders and attach great significance to the Jewish mediation between both cultures.

The course deals the rise of modern anti-Semitism, explores the visual representation of the Jews in satirical press, and examines the consequences of the break up of the multi-national Habsburg empire and the foundation of the Czechoslovak Republic.

Objectives
In this course, students:
- Gain foundational knowledge of the history of Jews, anti-Semitism and nationalism in Bohemian Lands.
- Examine the notions of identity formation under the influence of nationalism, and nationality conflict.
- Symbolically reconstruct the history of a multi-ethnic society (and its collapse).
- Understand the ongoing process of re-interpretation of Czech-German-Jewish history
- Learn to use and interpret historical sources

Course Requirements
Attendance and active participation in class is required. Students are expected to come to class having read all assignments (readings average 40 to 50 pages per class session) and prepared to engage in class discussion. Pop quizzes (5 to 7 each term) check that students have completed the obligatory weekly reading.
CET Syllabus of Record

The main assignments of the term require students to select one topic relevant to the course subject matter. For the midterm paper, students submit a review of a scholarly book dealing with this topic. This paper must be at least 1,000 words in length and contain proper references.

For the final paper, students complete substantial research on the topic. This research must include at least one scholarly monograph and two other sources (usually scholarly articles). The final paper must be at least 3,000 words in length and show proper citing of sources. Both the midterm and final papers should be polished pieces, and should clearly demonstrate both the student's comprehension of the topic and his/her ability to formulate new ideas.

Throughout the term, students may be asked to prepare short presentations in class. At the end of the term, a comprehensive final exam focuses on major themes and topics covered in the course.

Students are expected to abide by CET's attendance policy.

Methods of Evaluation
The final grade is determined as follows:
- Participation in class: 10%
- Short tests based on weekly readings: 10%
- Midterm paper (book review): 20%
- Final test: 20%
- Final paper: 40%

Primary Texts
Cathleen M. Giustino: House Numbered 207-V: Ghetto Clearance and Municipal Activism in Prague around 1900." in: Austrian History Yearbook 2003
CET Syllabus of Record


Ezra Mendelsohn: The Jews of East Central Europe between the Wars. Bloomington 1983


Supplementary Texts
Selected articles in:
Judaica Bohemiae
Review of the Society for the History of Czechoslovak Jews
Leo-Baeck Institute Yearbook

Outline of Course Content
Note: Students cover approximately one topic per week.

Topic 1 – Course Introduction
A brief history of Austria-Hungary
The first republic

Topic 2 – Czechs and Germans Introduction
Cultural geography of Austro-Hungarian Empire
German language laws

Topic 3 - Jewish Emancipation, Jewish Religious Communities and Synagogues, Reform Haskalah in Europe
Haskalah in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Czech lands
CET Syllabus of Record

Topic 4 - Language and Education
Maria Theresa and Joseph II
Educational reforms
Czech and German language school
Jewish schools

Topic 5 – Prague—a Jewish Metropolis?
Jewish intellectuals, writers and voices in the political arena

Topic 6 - Discussing the Jews
Public discussion and controversy on Jewish emancipation and integration

Topic 7 - Visualizing the Other
Rise of nationalism and the modern nation

Topic 8 – Anti-Semitism
Cultural-religious-economic-racial anti-Semitism
Modern anti-Semitism in Europe

Topic 9 - Accusation of Jewish Ritual Murder, Hilsner Affair
European cases
Cases in the Czech lands

Topic 10 – “Asanace” the Reconstruction of the Jewish Town in Prague
Walk through Josefov
Walk through the Jewish town with the focus on the urban reconstruction of the neighborhood
History of the Jewish Museum

Topic 11 – Jews as a “Bridge” between Czechs and Germans
Jewish cultural influences

Topic 12 - Looking Beyond 1918
The Second World War
The Holocaust
Jews under communism