

Yiddish Song and the Jewish Experience Syllabus Spring 2015

Professor Pamela Potter

Office: WisCEL space, 3250 College Library

Office Hours: Mon 1-3 p.m, 3261 College Library

Email: pmpotter@wisc.edu

Blended Course TA: Allison Bloom

Email: akbloom@wisc.edu

Learning Objectives

- To gain insights into Yiddish song as an expression of the modern Jewish experience
- To develop an appreciation for Yiddish language and culture
- To develop listening and interpretive skills
- To increase understanding of culture and contributions of marginalized groups in the United States, both historically and in contemporary times

Required Reading and Assignments

Each week all students need to prepare for the Face-to-Face meeting by reading the .pdfs, slideshows, and lyrics, and listening to the recordings, that are online at our course's Learn@UW site. Most weeks there will also be a brief comprehension quiz that will help us gauge how much information you're absorbing.

In the Face-to-Face meetings, you will work together with your classmates in various ways to engage actively with the material. The active learning activities we have planned include working together to interpret songs, debate issues, submit written responses, and prepare small group projects.

All students are required to attend weekly Face-to-Face Meetings, Mondays 12:05 p.m., in the WisCEL Space in Helen C. White Library (College Library 3250).

Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

1. Jan 26 - What is Folk Song?
2. Feb 2 - Life in the Shtetl
3. Feb 9 - Persecution in Russia, Customs and Escapism
4. Feb 16 - Breakdown of Traditions, Chassidism and its Opponents
5. Feb 23 - Love, Marriage and Urbanization
6. March 2 - European Yiddish Theater and the Labor Movement
7. March 9 MIDTERM
8. March 16 - Emigration to America
9. March 23 - Life in America

(Spring break March 30)

10. April 6 - The Labor Movement in America
 11. April 13 - Yiddish Theater in the US & Yiddish Film
 12. April 20 - The Holocaust
 13. April 27 - Antisemitism in America
 14. May 4 - Music as a Means of Exclusion (Coasties & Sconnies)
- (FINAL EXAM: May 15 Friday 10:05 - 12:05 - Location TBA)

Technology Policy

Because this is a blended learning course in which you're expected to actively participate, cellphones, your own laptops, and other devices are not allowed in class. The WisCEL space provides laptops for student use; all of your in-class work should be done on the WisCEL laptops only.