

PSCI 396
Fall 2021
LWH 3044
M/W 11:30am-12:45pm
3 credit hours

William D. Adler
Office: LWH 2068
Hours: M/W 9-11:30am
Email: w-adler@neiu.edu
Phone: (773) 442-5657

Jewish Political Thought **College of Arts & Sciences Syllabus**

This course explores the Jewish political tradition, focusing particularly on the concepts of power, sovereignty, and community. Starting from the Biblical text, we will examine how both classical and modern thinkers within the Jewish tradition understood the ways in which power was created, the different meanings of leadership, the idea of national independence, and the ultimate question of belonging within a fragmented political community.

Required Texts

- Michael Walzer, et. al., eds., *The Jewish Political Tradition*, Volume 1 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003)
- Michael Walzer, et. al., eds., *The Jewish Political Tradition*, Volume 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006)
- Michael Walzer, et. al., eds., *The Jewish Political Tradition*, Volume 3 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018)
- Michael Stanislawski, *Zionism: A Very Short Introduction* (2nd edition) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).
- Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin, 2010)

Course Learning Objectives

This course requires substantial reading and writing, as well as class discussions. Students are expected not only to learn the substantive material, but also to apply the ideas they learn across multiple areas. By the end of the semester, students should be able to understand a wide range of topics relating to the Jewish political tradition, write a substantial research paper, and generate their own informed perspectives on many of the important questions we are considering.

Academic Integrity Policy

By enrolling in this course, you are bound by the NEIU Student Code of Conduct: <http://www.neiu.edu/university-life/student-rights-and-responsibilities/student-code-conduct>. You will be informed by your instructor of any additional policy specific to your course regarding plagiarism, class disruptions, etc.

ADA Statement

Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. To request accommodations, students with special needs should make arrangements with the Student Disability Services (SDS) office, located on the main campus in room D104. Contact SDS via (773) 442-4595 or <http://www.neiu.edu/university-life/student-disability-services>.

Campus Safety

Web links to Campus Safety: Emergency Procedures and Safety Information can be found on NEIUport on the MyNEIU tab or as follows:
http://homepages.neiu.edu/~neutemp/Emergency_Procedures/MainCampus/.

Course Requirements

- 1) Complete all readings on schedule. If you miss a class, email me for the next reading assignment, as the schedule may change. Bring the assigned readings with you to class.
- 2) Attend on time and actively participate in class discussions. Those who arrive more than 5 minutes late, or who leave in the middle of class, will be marked for half of an absence. Each student is allowed only **three** unexcused absences. Your participation grade will be reduced by one-third of a letter for each unexcused absence over three. Not being active during discussions will also result in lowering your participation grade. During week 6 of the semester I will update you as to your current participation grade, so that you will have an opportunity for improvement.
- 3) Take the midterm and final exams. They will be in take-home form.
- 4) Complete all required writing assignments.

Writing Assignment #1: You must write 5 short papers summarizing the assigned readings. Papers must be 2-3 pages in length. For each class you may write only one summary, and you may not submit more than 5 in total.

Once you have received a grade on your paper, I will give you the option of revising it, if you wish. All revisions are due within one week of when I return the paper to you.

Writing Assignment #2: Write a research paper.

This will be done in 4 stages:

1. Topic proposal. This should be 1-2 pages. Briefly describe your area of interest, and state your research question. Due no later than **September 27th**. The grade for this assignment is Approve/Disapprove. If I do not approve your proposal, you must rewrite and resubmit it.

2. Annotated bibliography. This must be 1-2 pages. List no fewer than 5 separate sources that you will use for your research, not including Internet sources or readings from the syllabus. Describe their relevance to your research. Due no later than **October 27th**.
3. First draft. This must be at least 6 pages. Cite all sources appropriately and include a bibliography. Due no later than **November 24th**.
4. Final draft. This must be 8-12 pages. Make all appropriate corrections to the first draft. Due no later than **December 6th**.

Late papers will be penalized one-third of a letter grade for each day they are late (barring serious emergencies, which must be documented). For the purposes of this course, “late” is defined as submitted through D2L after the class starting time on the due date of the assignment. I will not accept submissions via email or in hard copy. Do not wait to the last moment to submit assignments.

All written assignments must be typed in a 12 point font, double spaced, with one-inch margins, and have page numbers. Papers not meeting these criteria will be penalized.

Grading

Work conducted towards the end of the semester will be more heavily weighted in my mind when dispensing final grades; in other words, *improvement counts*.

Attendance/Participation: 15%

Research Paper: 30% (in categories)

- Annotated bibliography: 10%
- Paper: 20%

Summaries: 15%

Midterm: 20%

Final: 20%

90-100 A

80-89 B

70-79 C

60-69 D

Below 60 F

Incompletes will only be given for valid, documented emergencies.

NOTE ON PLAGIARISM: Any student found plagiarizing work will receive a grade of **zero** for that assignment and an **F** for the course. You will also be reported to the University for violating the academic integrity policy. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to: direct copying of material that is not your own, copying the material even while providing a citation, or copying

ideas without proper attribution. **It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism; if you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask!**

Schedule of Classes and Exams

August 23rd: Introduction to Jewish Political Thought

August 25th: Is There a Jewish Political Tradition?

Michael Fishbane, "Law, Story, and Interpretation: Reading Rabbinic Texts," in *The Jewish Political Tradition* (volume 1), xxxix-lv.

Alan Mittleman, "Biblical Politics," *Jewish Ideas Daily*, October 23, 2012, <http://www.jewishideasdaily.com/5208/features/biblical-politics/> [D2L]

August 30th and September 1st: Covenant, Revelation, and the Sources of Morality

JPT, chapters 1 and 2

Joshua Berman, "Constitution, Class, and the Book of Deuteronomy," *Hebraic Political Studies* 1:5 (Fall 2006): 523-548. [D2L]

(September 6th – Labor Day – **No classes**)

(September 8th – Class canceled)

September 13th, 15th, and 20th: Governing Structures - Kings and Courts

JPT, chapters 3, 23, and 24

(September 22nd and 29th – Class canceled)

September 27th and October 4th: Governing Structures - Rabbis and the Oral Tradition

JPT, chapter 6

October 6th and 11th: Welfare and Taxation

JPT, chapters 20 and 21

October 13th: “The Chosen People”

JPT, chapter 11

October 18th and 20th: Gender Hierarchies

JPT, chapters 13 and 18

October 25th: Midterm Exam due

October 27th, November 1st, 3rd, 8th, 10th, and 15th: The State of Israel

JPT, chapter 10

Stanislowski, *Zionism*

November 17th, 22nd, 24th, 29th, December 1st and 6th: Responses to the Holocaust

Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*

Adam Kirsch and Rivka Galchen, “Fifty Years Later, Why Does ‘Eichmann in Jerusalem’ Remain Contentious?” *New York Times* (November 26, 2013). [D2L]

December 9th: Final Exam due