Memo
From: Michael Zank, Acting Director, EWCJS (2011-12)
To: Susan Jackson, Sr. Assoc. Dean CAS
Re: Proposal of changes to the JS minor
March 23, 2012

Dear Susan,

At a meeting on September 8, 2011, the Judaic Studies faculty voted to make the following changes to the existing Minor in Judaic Studies. The proposed changes are partly a matter of presentation, aiming to make the minor more visible to students, and partly a matter of curricular clarification. The goal is to broaden the appeal of the existing program, traditionally focused on Jewish religion, and make it more evident that Jewish studies can be approached from other angles as well, including history, anthropology, sociology, literature, and politics.

1) Change of name from "Judaic Studies" to "Jewish Studies."
"Judaic" is now a rather uncommon word, and it represents an obstacle for students who are exploring our offerings on the web. Changing the academic program name to "Jewish Studies" should generate more "hits" when students "google" BU searching for offerings related to Jewish studies. Furthermore, we understand "Judaic" as referring to a model of studies grounded in religion, specifically in the sacred literatures of Judaism. This no longer represents fully what we do at BU. BU Jewish studies faculty still relies on colleagues in Religion and Theological studies, but we've been growing in social studies and the humanities by adding faculty in History, Archaeology, and Anthropology, among others. "Jewish Studies" is a better, more accurate descriptor of our curricular breadth and intention than the antiquated and narrow "Judaic Studies."

2) Continue to require six courses: no change.

3) Require CAS RN 216 "Judaism"
With the diversification and broadening of the curriculum we feel the need for a core course that will introduce students to Jewish studies. The closest to such a course is the current CAS RN216 Judaism, offered by the Religion department, with Prof.s Katz and Klawans currently offering the course in rotation, once a year.

4) Discontinue requiring one of RN 101 or RN 104
With the shift of focus from Jewish text and religion to a cultural-studies model we feel that RN101 or RN104 are no longer ideal courses as a gateway to Jewish studies. These courses may still count toward the JS minor.

5) Replace the requirement of one course, but no more than two, at the 200 level and at least three at the 300 level or higher, with the following: "Of the remaining five courses, three must be numbered 300 or higher or, in the case of LH courses, LH 250 or higher."
6) We established a master list of elective courses in four general categories—
Texts and Interpretations; Language, Literature, and Film; History and Society; Philosophy and Thought—to guide students, with the help of their advisors, in identifying and pursuing particular interests. This list will be updated each fall, in conjunction with the annual curricular self-study.

I'd also like to bring to your attention two other curricular elements.

a) Study abroad in Israel: We have started advertising the availability of financial aid to students studying abroad, indicating that preference will be given to students enrolled in the minor in Jewish studies or in Hebrew. We are also in conversation with the BU program at Haifa University as well as the BU Padua program to make sure that appropriate course offerings are available that can be used for credit toward the JS minor.

b) Hebrew language study: The mention of LH 250 courses or higher continues to emphasize the importance of Hebrew and we will continue to draw attention to the Hebrew program in MLCL and its contribution to the degree in JS.
Brief guide to changes in the CAS minor concentration in Jewish Studies

The following guide highlights changes in the minor concentration in Jewish Studies, as approved by the JS faculty meeting of September 8, 2011.

1) What counts towards the minor and how is the curriculum presented to students?

   a) We are keeping a complete and up to date inventory of Judaic Studies courses. This master list of courses automatically counting toward the minor will be updated every year and a copy kept in CAS Records. Please keep a copy of this list on file for advising and course planning purposes.

   b) Other courses may be counted with advisor approval toward the minor depending on topics and areas covered. Examples include RN 206 (Sacred Texts), RN 241 (Topics in Religion and Evil), and CAS LS 452 (Topics in Latin America Literature and Culture; Topic for Fall 2011: Leaving Home).

   c) To count toward the minor, topics courses ought to be more than simply useful for the study of Jews and Judaism; the litmus test ought to be whether the course devotes significant attention to the study of Jews and Judaism. All relevant topics courses will be listed in a section of courses that qualify for the minor concentration in Jewish Studies on a petition basis only.

   d) Following are four categories that we agreed to use as suggested areas of study:

      - Texts and Interpretations
      - Language, Literature, and Film
      - History and Society
      - Philosophy and Thought

      We created a chart listing all classes relevant to each category but this does not mean that we are introducing a field requirement to the minor. But we think that both students and advisors will benefit from a clear presentation of a program of study that offers some curricular cohesion.

   e) The complete list of Jewish Studies courses, the suggested areas of study in table form, the other “topical courses,” the requirements for the minor, and the rationale for those requirements will also be presented on the EWCJS website and updated as needed.

2) RN 216 as a gateway course:

   a) We agreed to make RN 216 Judaism a required course for all minors. The course will serve as a gateway to Jewish Studies and ensure that minors
achieve a basic familiarity with a few key aspects of Judaism. Instructors on rotation for RN 216 (currently Klawans and Katz) are expected to touch on each of the four curricular areas of study listed above and keep in mind the course's new role as a foundational or gateway course for the program.

b) Students will no longer be required to complete one of either RN 101 (The Bible) or RN 104 (Religions of the World: Western).

3) *Other:*

The JS minor will be administered by the Elie Wiesel Center for Judaic Studies, which will be in charge of registering students and processing their declaration of a minor concentration in CAS, keeping student records, provide forms (grade change forms, etc.), keep syllabi on file, and keep the course and program related information on the web up to date. Since all of our courses are offered by other units of the university, it will be important to use the annual curricular self-study to determine curricular needs (including frequency and scheduling of course offerings) and communicate effectively with participating faculty and cognate departments.
Minor in Judaic Studies

Six courses from the following list completed with a grade of C or higher, including either CAS RN 101 or RN 104 and at least one but no more than two 200-level courses. The remaining three or four courses should be taken at the 300 level or higher. The study of Hebrew is strongly encouraged. Students who choose to complete the CAS foreign language requirement using Hebrew may receive credit for CAS LH 212 toward the minor in Judaic studies. Any student may count up to two courses in Hebrew language toward the minor, provided those courses are taken at the LH 212 level or higher. Refer to departmental sections for complete descriptions of courses.

- CAS HI 223 Jews in the Modern World
- CAS HI 383 Topics in the History of Israel
- CAS HI 552 Topics in Jewish History
- CAS LH 111 First-Semester Hebrew
- CAS LH 112 Second-Semester Hebrew
- CAS LH 117 Biblical Hebrew I
- CAS LH 139 Intensive First-Year Hebrew
- CAS LH 211 Third-Semester Hebrew
- CAS LH 212 Fourth-Semester Hebrew
- CAS LH 282 Agnon and Oz: In Search of Identity (in English translation)
- CAS LH 311 Fifth-Semester Hebrew
- CAS LH 312 Sixth-Semester Hebrew
- CAS LH 350 Hebrew Narrative
- CAS LH 351 Styles and Meaning of Hebrew Poetry
- CAS RN 101 The Bible
- CAS RN 104 Religions of the World: Western
- CAS RN 201 The Hebrew Bible
- CAS RN 202 From Jesus to Christ: The Origins of Christianity
- CAS RN 216 Judaism
- CAS RN 220 Holy City: Jerusalem in Time, Space, and Imagination
- CAS RN 221 Moses
- CAS RN 308 The Open Heaven: Apocalyptic Literature in Early Judaism and Christianity
- CAS RN 319 Midrash: Classical Rabbinic Biblical Interpretation
- CAS RN 320 Readings in Classical Hebrew
- CAS RN 321 Wisdom Tradition in Ancient Israel and Judaism
- CAS RN 322 History of Judaism
- CAS RN 323 Classical Jewish Thought
- CAS RN 324 Introduction to Rabbinic Literature
- CAS RN 325 Jewish Mysticism
- CAS RN 326 Jewish Mystical Movements and Modernization 1492–2000
- CAS RN 328 Judaism in the Modern Period
- CAS RN 329 Modern Jewish Thought
CAS RN 330 American Jewish Experiences
CAS RN 331 Zionism and the State of Israel
CAS RN 333 Antisemitism
CAS RN 334 Dead Sea Scrolls
CAS RN 335 Judaism in the First Century
CAS RN 336 The Heretical Jew (meets with CAS XL 281)
CAS RN 337 Gender and Judaism
CAS RN 339 The Modern Jew
CAS RN 384 The Holocaust
CAS RN 385 Representations of the Holocaust in Literature and Film (meets with CAS XL 281)
CAS RN 420 Maimonides
CAS RN 439 Jewish Bioethics
CAS RN 459 Primo Levi within Holocaust Literature

Elie Wiesel Center for Judaic Studies

Administration

Michael Zank Acting Director

The Boston University Elie Wiesel Center for Judaic Studies coordinates and supports all academic programs relating to Judaic studies at the University. The services and programs of the center are available to Judaic studies students and all others interested in the subject area.

Advising

Judaica minors are assigned members of the Judaica faculty as advisors who help them formulate their minors in accordance with department requirements. Students considering a Judaic studies minor are encouraged to make an appointment with the center director to discuss their plans.

Courses, Library Enhancement, and University Programs

The center seeks to coordinate all courses in Judaic studies at Boston University. Its ambition is to provide a broad-based, academically rigorous curriculum in the most important areas of Jewish history, literature, and thought. In addition to supporting the University teaching program in Hebrew language study, the center actively works to support the enhancement of relevant library resources and to sponsor relevant lectures, conferences, and publications in Judaic studies. The center is committed to the support of all types of research in Judaic studies.

Special Events

The center hosts special events of high quality and interest in order to further the integration of Judaic studies into the life of the University and the community at large. These include programs in film, theatre, and music, all of which contribute to the cultural life of the University.

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* = Hebrew classes below LH212 that build, but do not count, toward the minor in Jewish studies.

Core class:

RN216 Judaism (to be offered annually)

Topics classes (Automatic approval; no petition required):

- Topics in Jewish History (CAS HI552)
- Topics in the History of Israel (HI393)
- Topics in Judaic Studies (CAS RN499/799).

Advisor approval required; depending on topic

- Topics in Religion & Evil (CAS RN241)
- Topics in Ancient Christianity (CAS RN 498/798, STH TH830)
- Topics in Religion and Literature (CAS RN524, CAS XL560)
- Topics in Medieval Religious Culture (CAS RN470/770 CAS HI407/707)
- Topics in Religious Thought (CAS RN452/472)
- Seminar in Literature (EN220)
- Topics in Latin America Literature and Culture (CAS LS 452) E.g., topic for Fall 2011: Leaving Home (Borinsky).
