

Rachel B. Gross  
Young Scholars in American Religion  
Fall 2017

## **Jewish History in the United States San Francisco State University**

### **Institutional Setting**

San Francisco State University (SF State) is a public research university within the 23-campus California State University (CSU) system, the largest public university system in U.S. According to 1960 California Master Plan, the University of California system would accept the top one-eighth of the state's graduating high school seniors; the CSU system would accept the top one-third; and all eligible students would have a place in the state's community colleges.

SF State is primarily a commuter college, though it is slowly offering more campus housing. Thirteen percent of SF State's students are transfers, primarily from community colleges. Most students work long hours to put themselves through school, and many are non-traditional students. Student retention is an ongoing issue; only 53 percent of students graduate within six years. Throughout the CSU, one in five students have experienced food insecurity and one in ten have experienced housing displacement in the past year. The housing crisis in the Bay Area suggests that both issues are particularly acute at SF State.

Many students are first- or second-generation immigrants, and many are first-generation college students. About one-third of SF State students are Asian American, a quarter are Hispanic, and one quarter are white. SF State has the only College of Ethnic Studies in the country, created after student strikes in the late 1960s. SF State continues to be known for its vocal contingent of radical leftist students, though this is not the primary concern of most students.

### **Curricular Context**

The Department of Jewish Studies has very few majors and a handful of minors. Offering courses that fulfill General Education requirements and attract a broad range of students, such as this one, is a primary part of the department's mission. This course is most students' first sustained encounter with Jewish religion, history, and culture. A few Jewish students take this course, but many have a limited knowledge of Jewish history and practice. The course is cross-listed with the Department of History and attracts some history majors, but it also has a large number of non-humanities majors taking the class to fulfill university requirements. It is capped at thirty students and regularly enrolls close to that number.

### **Teaching Methodology**

For some time, the U.S. Jewish establishment—including but not limited to not limited to congregational leaders, philanthropists, journalists, and sociologists of Jews—has worried loudly and regularly about the state of “the Jewish community,” often without examining what that category entails. This course uses the theme of community to focus on the experiences of ordinary U.S. Jews rather than on “great men.” This course asks: Is there a single Jewish community? What are its boundaries, and who has power within it? It examines how U.S. Jews have maintained their local communities and how they have imagined themselves as a national community. Course material carefully balances studies of Jewish men and Jewish women. A focus on communal boundaries throughout the course highlights Jews' relationship to non-Jews, particularly to a Christian majority. The community theme is also designed to help students draw parallels and contrasts between their own communities and the lives of our subjects.

Class structure moves between lectures and discussions. Reading material includes both primary and secondary sources, and reading assignments are accompanied by guiding questions that will be the focus of that class. Students are required to post regularly post brief reading responses on the course site in order to keep them accountable and to jumpstart class discussion; those reading responses are graded according the rubric on this syllabus. The course material has an occasional focus on San Francisco Jewish history, and occasional academic and non-academic guest lecturers help provide students with a variety of approaches to the material.



Mae Rockland Tupa, *Miss Liberty*, Hanukkah Lamp, 1974

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## JS/HIST 449

### *Jewish History in the United States*

Fall 2017

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**Class meetings:** Humanities 477  
Monday/Wednesday 2:10–3:25 pm

**Prof. Rachel Gross**, rbgross@sfsu.edu

**Office hours:** Humanities 446  
Monday/Wednesday 3:30–4:30 pm

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#### Overview: U.S. Jewish Communities

This course uses questions about communities as the basis for a survey of U.S. Jewish history from the colonial period through the present. We will move between studies of specific Jewish communities and conceptions of national U.S. Jewish communities, asking questions about communities that be applied to other groups in and beyond the U.S., including those in which class members participate.

- How should we define community?
- How do communities function and how are they maintained?
- How have gender norms and expectations shaped communities?
- Who and what has held power in U.S. Jewish communities?
- Are U.S. Jews one community or many communities?

#### Course Objectives

Upon the successful completion of this course, students will learn to:

- Identify major trends in the history of Jews in the U.S.
- Interpret historical primary sources.
- Appraise secondary, scholarly works of history.
- Reflect on readings and discussion orally and in writing.
- Understand that history is constructed and that they can participate in that process.

#### Grade Distribution

- Participation **20%**
- Forum posts **15%**
- Papers **65%**

#### Deadlines

*Assignments due by 11:59 pm.*

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#### Sunday, September 24

Snyder response paper due

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#### Sunday, October 29

Exchange of letters due

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#### Sunday, November 12

“What else?” topic proposal due

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#### Sunday, December 3

Community newspaper article due

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#### Monday, December 18

Annotated bibliography due

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## Class topics and readings

Assigned readings should be prepared by the course date under which they are listed.

### Week

# 1

#### **Class 1. Wednesday, August 23 Introduction to American Jewish history**

In class: American Jewish communities introductory video.

In class: Susan Braunstein, "[Mae Rockland Tupa, Miss Liberty, Hanukkah Lamp](#)," *The Jewish Museum*, reprinted from *Luminous Art: Hanukkah menorahs of the Jewish Museum* (2004), pp. 201–202.


#### **Class 2. Monday, August 28 Introduction to Jewish communities**

Read the entire syllabus.

Megan Garber, "[What Does 'Community' Mean?](#)" *The Atlantic*, July 3, 2017.

Aaron Potek, "Coming to Community," *Sh'ma Now*, October 2016, p. 1.

- *How would you define community? How do Garber and Potek think about communities? What are your communities?*

 *Copy Edge Printing will sell course packets in class for \$75.*

### Week

# 2

#### **Class 3. Wednesday, August 30 Transatlantic communities**

Holly Snyder, "Rethinking the Definition of 'Community' for a Migratory Age, 1654–1830," in *Imagining the American Jewish Community* (2007), pp. 3–27.

Zola and Dollinger, docs. 1.03–1.05.

- *Many historians have studied American Jewish history in terms of "synagogue communities." Why does Snyder critique this approach, and what does she propose as an alternative?*


 *No class Monday, September 4 Labor Day*

#### **Class 4. Wednesday, September 6 Ritual baths**

Laura Arnold Leibman, "Early American Mikva'ot: Ritual Baths as the Hope of Israel," in *American Jewry: Transcending the European Experience* (2017), pp. 64–92.

Laura Arnold Leibman, "[Female \(Mis\)Behavior, Class, and Religious Authority: Bath Attendants in Early America](#)," *Religion in American History*, August 18, 2014.

- *What resources does Leibman use to analyze early American mikva'ot (ritual baths)? What does studying mikva'ot tell us about early American Jews' religious concerns and social structures?*

 *Annotation assignment due in class Wednesday, September 6.*

### Week

# 3

## Week

## 4

**Class 5. Monday, September 11 Seeking civic equality**

Eli Faber, “Early American Jewry and the Quest for Civil Equality,” in *American Jewry*, pp. 93–102.

Zola and Dollinger, docs. 1.09, 2.04, 2.07–2.09.

- *When and how did colonial and U.S. Jews pursue civic equality? In what ways did Jews’ civic inequality and equality matter to the early U.S. republic?*

**Class 6. Wednesday, September 13 Children’s education**

Dianne Ashton, “The Lessons of Hebrew Sunday School,” in *American Jewish Women’s History: A Reader* (2003), pp. 26–42.

Zola and Dollinger, docs. 3.11, 3.13.

- *What were the aims of Jewish children’s education in the nineteenth century? How did changing ideas about women’s roles impact Jewish children’s education?*

**Class 7. Monday, September 18 Jews and slavery**

Isaac M. Fein, “Baltimore Rabbis During the Civil War,” in *Jews and the Civil War* (2010), pp. 181–196.

Zola and Dollinger, docs. 4.09, 4.19–4.20.

- *How did mid-nineteenth-century Jews and Jewish communities position themselves in relation to slavery? How did they defend their choices?*

## Week

## 5


**Class 8. Wednesday, September 20 Friendships across divides**

 *No class meeting.*

Dianne Ashton, “Shifting Veils: Religion, Politics and Womanhood in the Civil War Writings of American Jewish Women,” in *Jews and the Civil War*, pp. 279–306.

Zola and Dollinger, docs. 4.04, 4.12

- *How did Jewish women maintain their friendships across religious and political divides during the Civil War?*

 *Reading response due Wednesday, September 20 by 11:59 pm (required).*

 *Snyder paper due Sunday, September 24.*

## Week

## 6

**Class 9. Monday, September 25 Pews and denominations**

Jonathan D. Sarna, “The Debate over Mixed Seating in the American Synagogue,” in *The American Synagogue: A Sanctuary Transformed* (1987), pp. 363–394.

Zola and Dollinger, doc. 5.19.

- *What do seating patterns in synagogues reveal about American Jewish congregations? How much were they related to theological and denominational commitments?*

**Class 10. Wednesday, September 27 Leadership and celebrity**

Shari Rabin, “‘The Advent of a Western Jewess’: Rachel Frank and Jewish Female Celebrity in 1890s America,” *Nashim: The Journal of Jewish Women’s Studies and Gender Issues* 22 (Fall 2011), pp. 111–135.

Zola and Dollinger, doc. 5.21.

- *How did Rachel Frank choose to present herself? What does her celebrity reveal about popular images of Jewish women?*

**Class 11. Monday, October 2 Peddlers**

Hasia Diner, “Entering the Mainstream of Modern Jewish History: Peddlers and the American Jewish South,” *Southern Jewish History* 8 (2005), pp. 1–30.

Zola and Dollinger, doc. 3.07.

- *How did Jewish peddlers impact the creation of new Jewish communities in the United States?*

**Class 12. Wednesday, October 4 Newspapers**

Shari Rabin, “People of the Press: Periodicals and the Creation of American Judaism,” in *Religious Periodicals and Publishing in Transnational Contexts: The Press and the Pulpit* (2017), pp. 73–90.

*Weekly Gleaner* [San Francisco] excerpts: Julius Eckman, “Our Divorces,” January 16, 1857, p. 4; Julius Eckman, “The Duties of Woman,” January 16, 1857, p. 5; Obituary, February 6, 1857, p. 27; advertisements, February 20, 1857, p. 47; advertisements, March 20, 1857, p. 75.

*Emanu-El* [now *J. The Jewish News of Northern California*] excerpts: Jacob Voorsanger, “Random Thoughts,” November 13, 1903, p. 5; “Social Column,” November 13, 1903, p. 15; advertisements, November 20, 1903, p. 18; “Directory of Jewish Institutions of San Francisco,” November 20, 1903, p. 19.

- *How did newspapers help American Jews create a national community?*

📖 In class: David A.M. Wilensky, online editor, [J. The Jewish News of Northern California](#).

## Week

## 7

Week  
8

**Class 13. Monday, October 9 Immigrants' religion**

Annie Polland, "'May a Freethinker Help a Pious Man?': The Shared World of the 'Religious' and the 'Secular' Among Eastern European Jewish Immigrants to America," *American Jewish History* 93.4 (December 2007), pp. 375–407.

Zola and Dollinger, doc. 5.12.

- *What was the relationship between religious and freethinking (non-religious) eastern European Jewish immigrants?*

**Class 14. Wednesday, October 11 Labor activism**

Alice Kessler-Harris, "Organizing the Unorganizable: Three Jewish Women and Their Union," *Labor History* 17 (Winter 1976), pp. 5–23.

Zola and Dollinger, docs. 5.13, 5.17.

- *What challenges did Jewish women labor activists face? How did the labor movement shape American Jewish women's ideas of themselves and their communities?*

**Class 15. Monday, October 16 The countryside**

Sarah Imhoff, *Masculinity and the Making of American Judaism* (2017), ch. 3, "Go West, Young Jew: The Galveston Movement, Immigrant Men, and the Pioneer Spirit," pp. 97–127.

Zola and Dollinger, doc. 5.04.

- *What was the relationship between conceptions of the city and conceptions of Jewish masculinity? What were the goals of the Galveston Movement?*

 *Forum audit due Monday, October 16.*

Week  
9


**Class 16. Wednesday, October 18 Immigration memoir**

 *No class meeting.*

Mary Antin, *The Promised Land* (1912), Introduction, pp. xi–xv; ch. 9–12, pp. 180–251.

Jenna Weissman Joselit, "[My Country, My Country](#)," *New Republic*, July 31, 2012.

- *What role does public school play in Antin's transformation—some scholars call it a "conversion"—into an American? How does Antin think about being a Jew and being an American?*

 *Reading response due Wednesday, October 18 by 11:59 pm (required).*

Week  
10

**Class 17. Monday, October 23      Leo Frank**

 Tracy V. Wilson and Holly Frey, "[The Trial of Leo Frank](#)," *Stuffed You Missed in History Class*, August 3, 2011, 23 minutes.

Imhoff, *Masculinity and the Making of American Judaism*, ch. 8, "Leo Frank and Jewish Sexuality," pp. 225–243.

Zola and Dollinger, doc. 5.37.

- *What does the Leo Frank case reveal about U.S. Jews' social status in the early twentieth century? What does it tell us about ideas of Jewish masculinity?*


**Class 18. Wednesday, October 25      Communal institutions**

Mary Ann Irwin, "Sex, War, and Community Service: The Battle for San Francisco's Jewish Community Center," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 32.1 (2011), pp. 36–70.

Zola and Dollinger, doc. 5.40.

"Young Men's Hebrew Association," *Emanu-El*, February 5, 1904, p. 12.

- *What does the shift from San Francisco Jewish communal organizations led by women to those led by men tell us about Jews' changing ideas about community and gender roles?*

 *Exchange of letters due Sunday, October 29.*

**Class 19. Monday, October 30      World War II**

Deborah Dash Moore, *GI Jews: How World War II Changed a Generation*, ch. 3, "Eating Ham for Uncle Sam," pp. 49–85.

Zola and Dollinger, doc. 7.04, 7.06–7.07.

- *How did military service shape the way Jewish soldiers understood their identity in World War II?*

Week  
11

**Class 20. Wednesday, November 1      The suburbs**

Lila Corwin Berman, "American Jews and the Ambivalence of Middle-Classness," *American Jewish History* 93.4 (December 2007), pp. 409–443.


Zola and Dollinger, docs. 8.01–8.03.

- *How did Jews' entrance into the middle class impact American Jewish communities? How did Jews reshape their communities in the suburbs?*

Week  
12

**Class 21. Monday, November 6 American Zionism**

Emily Alice Katz, *Bringing Zion Home: Israel in American Jewish Culture, 1948–1967* (2015), ch. 4, “A Consuming Passion: Israeli Goods in American Jewish Culture,” pp. 81–110.

 [That’s My Wife](#) (1956), directed by Stephen L. Scharff, 28 minutes. Watch the first ten minutes.

Zola and Dollinger, doc. 8.29.


- *How did American Zionism function as a leisure activity for mid-twentieth century American Jews?*

**Class 22. Wednesday, November 8 Civil rights**

Marc Dollinger, *Quest for Inclusion: Jews and Liberalism in Modern America* (2000), ch. 7, “‘Hamans and Torquemadas’: Southern and Northern Jewish Responses to the Civil Rights Movement, 1945–1965,” pp. 164–190.

Zola and Dollinger, docs. 8.20–8.21, 8.24.

- *How did Jews position themselves in relation to the Civil Rights Movement? How did they apply their ideas about Judaism to their approach to the Civil Rights Movement?*

 In class: Prof. Marc Dollinger, Dept. of Jewish Studies, SFSU.

 “What else?” topic proposal due Sunday, November 12.

**Class 23. Monday, November 13 Jewish counterculture**

Rachel Kranson, “‘To Be a Jew on America’s Terms is Not to Be a Jew at All’: The Jewish Counterculture’s Critique of Middle-Class Affluence,” *Journal of Jewish Identities* 8.2 (July 2015), pp. 59–84.

Zola and Dollinger, docs. 9.15–9.16.


- *What did participants in Jewish counterculture aim to do? What helped or hindered them in achieving those goals?*

**Class 24. Wednesday, November 15 Senior centers**

Barbara Myerhoff, *Number Our Days: Culture and Community Among Elderly Jews in an American Ghetto* (1980), ch. 1, “So What Do You Want from Us Here?” pp. 1–39.

 [Number Our Days](#) (1976), directed by Lynne Littman, 29 minutes.

- *What do the members of the Aliyah Center want from their community? Why did Myerhoff choose to study this community?*

 No class Monday, November 20–Friday, November 24: Fall break and Thanksgiving.

Week  
13



Week  
14

**Class 25. Monday, November 27 LGBT synagogues**

Aaron Cooper, “No Longer Invisible: Gay and Lesbian Jews Build a Movement,” *Journal of Homosexuality* 18.3–4 (1989), pp. 89–94.

Joanne Cohen, “Remembering the Stranger: Identity, Community, and Same-Sex Marriage,” in *Queer Jews* (2002), pp. 172–188.

Rob Gloster, “[Why this LGBT Synagogue Is Moving Beyond Its 40-year Mission](#),” *J. The Jewish News of Northern California*, August 23, 2017.

Zola and Dollinger, doc. 10.20.

- *How have LGBT Jewish communities changed over time? How has their relationship to broader U.S. Jewish communities changed over time?*

🕒 In class: Paul Cohen, lay leader and first president of [Sha’ar Zahav](#).

**Class 26. Wednesday, November 29 Racial and religious conflict**

Henry Goldschmidt, *Race and Religion Among the Chosen Peoples of Crown Heights* (2006), ch. 1, “Collisions: Race and Religion, a Riot and a Pogrom,” pp. 36–75.

📺 *Fires in the Mirror* (1993), directed by George C. Wolfe, written by Anna Deavere Smith, [part one](#), 14 minutes; [part three](#), 14 minutes.

- *How did Black and Lubavitcher Crown Heights residents’ interpretations of the violence in the summer of 1991 reflect the social positions of each community?*

📁 Community newspaper article due Sunday, December 3.

**Class 27. Monday, December 4 Interfaith families**

Samira Mehta, “I Chose Judaism But Christmas Cookies Chose Me’: Food, Identity, and Religious Practice in Christian/Jewish Blended Families,” in *Religion, Food, and Eating in North America* (2014), pp. 154–174.

Zola and Dollinger, doc. 10.07.

- *How have interfaith families challenged Jewish communities? How do interfaith families negotiate divergent traditions and create new ones around food?*

🕒 In class via Skype: Prof. Samira Mehta, Dept. of Religious Studies, Albright College.

**Class 28. Wednesday, December 6 Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) boundaries**

Rachel Aviv, “The Outcast,” *The New Yorker*, November 10, 2014.

- *How does Aviv show us how the boundaries of communities can be policed? In what ways can communities be negative as well as positive forces?*

Week  
15

Week  
16

**Class 29. Monday, December 11      Reevaluating Jewish communities**


Ari Kelman, "The 75 Percent," *Sh'ma* 43, October 2012, pp. 1–2.


Leonard Saxe, "[The Sky Is Falling! The Sky Is Falling!](#)" *Tablet*, December 3, 2014.


*Sh'ma Now* excerpts, October 2016, pp. 3–6.

- *How have U.S. Jews' concerns about communities changed over time and how have they stayed the same? How have your ideas about communities changed this semester?*

Final  
exam  
period

 *Annotated bibliography due Monday, December 18.*

 *All extra credit due by Monday, December 18.*

 *No meeting on scheduled final exam period.*

**Participation.** Our class is a community based on intellectual engagement. Preparation of assigned material before coming to class, consistent attendance, and active participation in class discussions are essential. **20%**

- Active participation includes listening intently to others, taking notes on lectures, and asking questions, as well as sharing interpretations and opinions. Courteous dialogue is required.
- Regular attendance is required. Students have *two unexcused absences*, no questions asked. Subsequent absences will significantly affect your grade. When possible, speak to Prof. Gross in advance if you must miss class for religious holiday, illness, or other essential reasons.
- In-class participation is graded on one-third attendance, one-third attention, and one-third articulation.
- Assigned reading materials must be brought to class in hard copy, using the course reader or printed from documents on iLearn. As [many studies](#) demonstrate, reading comprehension of printed material is generally better than reading comprehension of digital texts. An option course reader is available from [Copy Edge Printing](#).
- The course reader and iLearn materials include material *American Jewish History: A Source Reader*, ed. Gary Phillip Zola and Marc Dollinger (2014). A free loan of this book is available by request of Prof. Gross. It is also available as an ebook via the SF State library.
- Write on the texts! Prepare for class by engaging in [active reading](#) by underlining or highlighting and making annotations of the texts. [Take notes](#) on audiovisual materials.
- Cell phones must be on silent and put away during class. Laptops are not permitted during class discussions, and students may be asked to put them away at other times.
- **Miscellaneous assignments.** Various graded assignments such as homework assignments, classroom activities, reading responses for days when we do not meet in class, and field trip requirements count as one-fifth of the participation grade or 5% of the total grade.
- Students are expected to regularly check their SFSU email addresses. Make sure that you are set to receive email notifications via iLearn. You are responsible for information sent by Prof. Gross to your SFSU email address and to the course via iLearn.

**Forum posts.** Students must post *fifteen responses* to readings and audiovisual assignments for days when the course meets in person throughout the semester. Posts should be *one concise paragraph consisting of about four to six sentences* that engage directly and expand upon the assigned material. **15%**

- There are a number of ways to approach these open-ended posts: consider the reading in relation to its historical context; ask a question about an aspect of the day's reading that you do not understand and suggest some possible answers; write about something that jars you and explain why; or respond to another student's

#### Forum posts grading rubric

Rating	Characteristics
10	<i>Exceptional.</i> The post reflects in-depth engagement with the assigned material. It is focused and coherently integrates examples with explanations or analysis of the assigned material. The writer is aware of the posts' limitations or implications, and the post considers multiple perspectives when appropriate.
8.5	<i>Satisfactory.</i> The post reflects moderate engagement with the assigned material. Fewer connections are made between ideas, and though new insights are offered, they are not fully developed.
7.5	<i>Underdeveloped.</i> The post reflects passing engagement with the topic. It is mostly description or summary, without consideration of alternative perspectives.
6.5	<i>Limited.</i> The post is unfocused or simply rehashes previous comments and displays no evidence of the writer's engagement with the assigned material.
0	<i>No Credit.</i> The post is missing or is incomprehensible.

post, building upon it, disagreeing with it, or re-thinking it.

- Forum posts may start a new thread about the assigned material or may be a response to a classmate's post. Students are strongly encouraged to respond to classmates' posts.
- Only one post per class meeting will be counted. The highest-scoring post per class meeting will be counted, and the highest ten posts will be counted.
- Formal writing style is required.
- Posts are due **by class time** on the day the material is assigned. Late posts will receive partial credit.
- Posts are graded on a scale of 0 to 10 points. (See grading rubric.)
- Students are strongly encouraged to add a picture of their face to their iLearn profile. This will help the class build a community through discussions in the iLearn forum.

**Snyder response paper.** Holly Snyder contends that the concept of a “synagogue community” is not the most useful way of analyzing early American Jewish life. Create and defend an argument agreeing or disagreeing with Snyder in a **four- to five-page** paper. Support your argument with examples from at least three course readings about Jewish life in the American colonies and the U.S. before the Civil War. Cite your sources using footnotes or endnotes. Due **Sunday, September 24. 15%**

**Exchange of letters.** Write an exchange of letters between two figures, historical or of your own creation, in one of the nineteenth century situations we have studied. You can write an exchange of letters between two U.S. peddlers, friends debating the Civil War, immigrants in different U.S. communities, or an immigrant and a family member in Europe. At least one of the characters must be Jewish. If you choose a scenario not listed here, you must get approval from Prof. Gross first. The total length of the exchange should be **four to six pages**. Draw from at least two course readings. You may use external sources but you are not required to do so. Cite your sources using footnotes or endnotes. Due **Sunday, October 29. 15%**

**Community newspaper article.** Imagine that you are a journalist writing for the local Jewish newspaper, *J., the Jewish News Weekly of Northern California*. Attend a local Jewish communal event and write an article about the event for the newspaper. Due **Sunday, December 3. 15%**

- Places to look for events include but are not limited to the [J. calendar](#), the [SFJCC](#), the [JCC East Bay](#), the [Peninsula JCC](#) (Foster City), the [Oshman Family JCC](#) (Palo Alto), the [Magnes Collection](#) at UC Berkeley, the [Contemporary Jewish Museum](#), and local synagogue websites. **Prof. Gross must approve your choice of event before you continue.** You may attend the same event with a classmate, though you must write separate papers.
- If appropriate: Email a representative of the site to introduce yourself; to gain permission to visit; and to ask if it would be possible to speak with a representative.
- Research the site you will visit. If it is aligned with a broader organization, such a denomination or a national organization, research that context.
- Read Gerry Tierney, “Becoming a Participant Observer,” in *Doing Cultural Anthropology: Projects in Ethnographic Data Collection* (2007), pp. 9–18.
- Create a set of questions to think about before attending the event. Submit this list along with your final paper. Review your questions after the event. Examples of preliminary questions include:  
 What was the setting like? Who participated and how did they do so? Did a group leader, such as an executive director, a rabbi, or a teacher lead the event? Did men and women participate equally? Was there music and how did it affect the mood? How formal or informal was the event? Note that dress is not

the only measure of formality. For example, was it primarily scripted or spontaneous? If food was served, what kinds of foods were they, and what do those choices suggest? How much time was spent in various activities? What kinds of preparations might have been necessary for these activities? How did participants interact with each other? How welcoming was the group to you as a stranger? What did they tell you about what is happening and what it means to them? What do they not tell you? What did you learn about the mission of the group, for members/participants, for the broader community, for the world?

- Carefully consider whether it will be appropriate to take notes, take photographs or record audio; in many cases, at least some of these activities will be inappropriate.
- Attend the event. Observe what people are doing and how they interact with the space, any objects, and with each other. Depending on the event, it may or may not be appropriate to take notes during the event. If it is not appropriate during the event (as at services), write down your impressions as soon as possible after the event. If you sent an email introducing yourself, follow up with a note of thanks.
- Review articles in the *J.* as examples of community reporting.
- Write a **four- to five-page article** about the event as if you were a journalist for the *J.* In your article as a journalist for the *J.*:
  - Pose a question or problem to be explored that can be answered through your research.
  - Create and defend an argument about this event and its relation to a Jewish community.
  - Describe what event you were at in terms of formal definition, drawing on course readings and your own research.
  - Analyze how what you actually saw and heard answers the question you posed. Omit reflections on your own comfort or discomfort.
  - Speculate upon the intersection between you observed and what you expected, based on readings, previous knowledge, or presuppositions.
- Submit both your initial list of questions and your newspaper article.

**What else?** Choose an issue of U.S. Jewish history that we will not discuss in depth during this course. Research the topic and defend an argument for why it should be included in future iterations of this course. **20%**

- **Topic proposal.** Submit a **one- to two-page** proposal that identifies a topic that we have not discussed. Describe what you want to focus on and suggest why it is important. The proposal must also include a list of at least **three sources** you have consulted or plan to consult. Due **Sunday, November 12**. **5%** of total grade.
- **Annotated bibliography.** An annotated bibliography is a list of your secondary sources, in proper bibliographic form (see the Chicago Manual of Style) that gives a brief introduction to each source's topic, aims, and methodology. Identify at least **eight sources** that are useful for your topic. Following the bibliographic entry, write a short paragraph (about three to five sentences) that describe the item's topic, its thesis/argument, a brief introduction to the author (discipline/field), and a brief description of the evidence used to support the author's thesis. Include at least one sentence identifying the value this item has for your class topic proposal. In addition to the annotated bibliography, write **two pages** presenting and defending an argument for why this example should be included in a course on U.S. Jewish history. Due **Monday, December 18**. **15%** of total grade.

**Paper rewrite option.** Students may rewrite any of their written work, with the exception of the final assignment. Contact Prof. Gross **within one week** of receiving your grade in order to discuss rewriting. You have one week after our discussion to turn in a revised assignment. Resubmit all assignments on iLearn. Rewritten assignments will not be accepted if you have not met with Prof. Gross first. If you not address all the issues in

your first submission, grades for rewrites may be lower than the original grade. You may rewrite assignments as many times as you like, following the same requirements.

**Extra credit.** Students can receive a limited number of extra credit points for attending Judaic Studies events and other selected events. These events will be announced in class and via email and iLearn. To receive credit, students should submit a paragraph (about five sentences) describing the event *no later than a week after the event*. Students may also receive extra credit for attending an exhibit at the [Magnes Collection](#) at UC Berkeley or the [Contemporary Jewish Museum](#) and writing a two-page review describing and critically analyzing the exhibit. Extra credit must follow all regular writing requirements. All extra credit due by Monday, December 18. **2 points per event.** Maximum 4 points.

## Writing requirements

**Submission.** All work must be submitted on iLearn *before 11:59 pm* Pacific time on the day it is due. Assignments turned in late will be *docked half a letter grade* per day.

**Formatting.** Submit papers as an MS Word document. Text must be double-spaced with one-inch margins and twelve-point Times New Roman font. Use 0.5-inch tabs at the start of paragraphs and no spaces between paragraphs. Number your pages starting with the second page. Do not add a cover page.

**Writing style.** All work completed for this class, including forum posts, must be written in formal, academic prose, with correct grammar and punctuation and attention to style. See the [Chicago Manual of Style](#) for a guide to writing and grammar. Log in using Prof. Gross's account.

**Citations.** Use Chicago style footnotes or endnotes and bibliographic citations for this class. Footnotes must be created through Word's [automatic footnote feature](#). Do not use parenthetical citations. Use Chicago Manual of Style's [Citation Quick Guide](#) as a model (no login required).

**Plagiarism.** Plagiarism occurs when writers misrepresent others' work as their own. To be sure when to cite your sources in written assignments, read "[Is It Plagiarism Yet?](#)" Assignments found to be plagiarized will be given an F and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. More information: <http://conduct.sfsu.edu/plagiarism>

*The Chicago Manual of Style*  
[chicagomanualofstyle.org](http://chicagomanualofstyle.org)

**Login:** XXXX

**Password:** XXXX

## Accommodations and assistance

**Tutoring:** Students in need of special accommodations regarding attendance and deadlines should contact Prof. Gross. The [Learning Assistance Center](#), located in HSS 348, offers tutoring in reading, writing, and study skills.

**Disabilities:** Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor. The [Disability Programs and Resource Center](#), located in Student Services Building 110, is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. Contact voice/TTY 415-338-2472 or [dprc@sfsu.edu](mailto:dprc@sfsu.edu).

**Sexual violence:** SF State fosters a campus free of sexual violence including sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or any form of sex or gender discrimination. If you disclose a personal experience of sexual violence as an SF State student, the course instructor is required to notify the Dean of Students. To disclose any such violence confidentially, contact: [The SAFE Place](#), 415-338-2208, or the [Counseling and Psychological Services Center](#), 415-338-2208. More information on your rights and available resources: [titleix.sfsu.edu](http://titleix.sfsu.edu)

**Other serious issues:** Contact Prof. Gross if you encounter serious issues that will impede your performance in this class in order to help you succeed to the best of your ability in this class. Consider contacting the [Dean of Students](#), whose job it is to help you succeed at SFSU. Serious issues include illness, providing for family members, and difficulty securing basic food and shelter. No need to contact Prof. Gross regarding non-serious

issues such as hangovers and bad traffic.

## Grading Scale

A	93–100	B	83–86	C	73–76	D	66–63
A-	90–92	B-	80–82	C-	70–72	D-	60–62
B+	87–89	C+	77–79	D+	67–69	F	59 and below

## Writing Evaluation Criteria

### ARGUMENT or PROPOSAL

A	B	C	D–F
Original, interesting, and nuanced. Well-chosen language. Clear argument.	Promising, if somewhat vague, obvious, overstated. May be too general or broad.	Flawed by weak logic, simplicity, or pointlessness. Overly general, broad, or obvious.	Absent or unfounded. Unrelated to the assignment. Glib or thoughtless.

### EVIDENCE

A	B	C	D–F
Ample, well integrated, thoughtfully interpreted, appropriate. Sources cited appropriately.	Adequate. May be clumsily or superficially analyzed or interpreted. May be inappropriate. Some sources not cited.	Inadequate or extraneous. May be carelessly chosen or poorly explained. Too much summary or too little analysis. Problems with citing sources.	Almost none. Inappropriate or misinterpreted. Sources not cited.

### STRUCTURE

A	B	C	D–F
Logical, graceful, progressive. Good transitions; well balanced, coherent. Starts fast; grabs the reader. Conclusion goes beyond summary. Considers the reader.	Coherent and easily followed. May be repetitive, imbalanced, or have weak transitions. Starts slowly. Conclusion only summarizes the paper.	Serious gaps or leaps in logic. Monotonous or repetitive. Disorganized; Does not consider the reader. Extraneous ideas or connections.	Formless, rushed, scattered. Lacks necessary transitions. No apparent organization.

### STYLE

A	B	C	D–F
Succinct, eloquent, precise. Well-chosen language. Variable sentence types. Apt and subtle diction.	Correct but may be clichéd or lack eloquence or precision. A few errors in grammar and usage. Repetitive language or sentence structure. Wordy.	Marred by cliché or error, poor diction, or inappropriate word choice. Poorly proofread. Little variety in language or sentence structure. Wordy.	Sloppy. Numerous errors in spelling and/or grammar. Not proofread. Wordy.