

## **JS211/RS 213 Kabbalah: Jewish Mysticism Fall/2018 SYLLABUS**

**Location:** AL 105

**Instructor:** Prof. James Diamond  
Chair-Jewish Studies

**Time:** 2:30-3:50

**Day:** Tues. & Thurs.

**Office:** PAS 1051

**Office Hours:** Tues. & Thurs.- 10:00- 11:15 AM or by appointment. If you can't make these times you can always contact me by email or phone or through LEARN and we can arrange a mutually convenient time. You do not have to restrict yourself to office hours. **I am always available to address your concerns even outside of office hours if arranged ahead of time.**

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### **Religious Studies Society Facebook Page:**

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/UW-RS-Society/569260749758923?fref=ts>

**DESCRIPTION** This course will survey the roots, history and symbolism of the Jewish mystical tradition known as *Kabbalah*. Students will be introduced to the major texts, charismatic mystical masters, and schools of *Kabbalah*, beginning with the ancient Rabbis through to contemporary exponents of Jewish mysticism such as Hasidim and messianic groups. Particular attention will be focused on the "bible" of Jewish mysticism, the *Zohar (Book of Splendour)*. Understanding the meaning and evolution of Jewish mysticism may also shed light on its current more popular appeal to Jews and non-Jews alike.

### **NOTE ON AVOIDANCE OF ACADEMIC OFFENSES:**

#### **Academic Integrity:**

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>

**Academic Integrity website (Arts):** [http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic\\_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html)

**Academic Integrity Office (UW):** <http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:**

**Note for students with disabilities:** The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

**Cross-listed course:**

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

**Required Texts:**

1. *Kabbalah: An Introduction to Jewish Mysticism*, Byron Sherwin (K)
2. Old Testament- Any translation you have or wish to purchase.

**Recommended Texts**

- Matt Daniel , *The Zohar: Book of Enlightenment* (Paulist Press)
- Green, Arthur, *A Guide to the Zohar*, Stanford Univ. Press, 2004
- Scholem, Gershom *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*
- Scholem, Gershom G. , *On the Kabbalah and its symbolism* Routledge & Kegan Paul : London
- Scholem, Gershom. *Kabbalah*. (Jerusalem: Keter, 1974).
- Scholem, Gershom G., *The Messianic idea in Judaism* Schocken : New York , 1971
- Scholem, Gershom G. , *Zohar* Schocken : New York , reprinted 1978
- Idel, Moshe, *Kabbalah;New Perspectives* Yale University Press : New Haven , 1988
- Tishby, Isaiah *The Wisdom of the Zohar* Oxford University Press : Oxford , 1989
- Steinsaltz, Adin *The Thirteen-Petaled Rose* Basic Books: New York, 1980
- Wolfson, Elliot R. *Through a Speculum That Shines: Vision and Imagination in Medieval Jewish Mysticism*. Princeton, 1994.
- Fine, Lawrence (ed)., *Essential Papers on Kabbalah*. New York Univ Pr; 1995.
- Wineman, Aryeh (ed)., *Mystic Tales from the Zohar*. Jewish Publication Society; 1997
- Hundert, Gershon David (ed)., *Essential Papers on Hasidism: Origins to Present*. New York Univ Pr; 1991
- Joseph Dan, *Kabbalah: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford Univ Press.
- The Heart and the Fountain: An Anthology of Jewish Mystical Experiences*

## Course Requirements

- Attendance and participation in all course sessions throughout the semester
- All reading assignments
- One minor term paper (5-6;typed, double spaced pages) analyzing and responding to one of the class readings (25%).
- One major term paper (9-10 typed, double spaced pages) (35%).
- Final Exam – Take home (40%).

### Submissions of Assignments

-Assignments are expected to be handed in, in class on the date due. If you can't make the class on that date an alternative drop off location will be designated on the assignment .

### Penalty for Late Submissions

Any late submissions without legitimate medical excuse will be subject to a penalty of a 25 percentage reduction in grade for each day it is handed in past the deadline.

**There will be no exceptions to this rule.**

-The Due Dates for assignments as scheduled may vary slightly but notice will be given well ahead of time.

### Schedule of Lecture Topics

**Lecture#1:** Overview of course, general introduction, requirements.

**Week #1-3:** What is Mysticism? What is Jewish Mysticism

Reading:

-K , pp. 1-45;

- Reading #1 (on LEARN) Gershom Scholem (General Characteristics of Jewish Mysticism)
- Reading # 2 (on LEARN) Early Mystical texts

**\*\*FIRST PAPER DUE- Week #4 (2<sup>nd</sup> class)\*\***

**Week# 4-7:The Zohar:** Doctrine of the Sefirot

Reading:

- K, pp.47-83;

-Reading #3; #4 (on LEARN)- selections from Zohar

### **Week #8: Mystical Union with God**

Reading:

-K pp. 85-103

-Reading #5; #6 (on LEARN) Luria

**\*\*SECOND PAPER DUE-Week#8 (2<sup>nd</sup> class)\*\***

### **Week#9 God in Need of Man**

Reading:

-K, pp.105-133;

-Reading #7; #8 (on LEARN)

### **Week #10: Prophetic Kabbalah & Mystical Techniques**

Reading:

- K, pp.135-162;

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- Reading #9 (on LEARN)

### **Week#11-12:Hasidism & the Zadiq**

Readings:

-K, pp.163-195;

-Reading #10 (on LEARN)

-Buber;

**FINAL EXAM-TAKE HOME**