
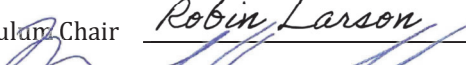
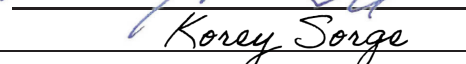

 FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY	<h2 style="text-align: center;">NEW COURSE PROPOSAL</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Undergraduate Programs</h3>		UUPC Approval <u>10-6-2025</u> UFS Approval _____ SCNS Submittal _____ Confirmed _____ Banner Posted _____ Catalog _____	
Department School of Communication and Multimedia Studies /		College Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters (To obtain a course number, contact erudolph@fau.edu)		
Prefix FIL Number 4886	(L = Lab Course; C = Combined Lecture/Lab; add if appropriate) Lab Code	Type of Course <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">Lecture</div>	Course Title Jews in American Film and Television	
Credits (See Definition of a Credit Hour) 4	Grading (Select One Option) Regular <input checked="" type="radio"/> Sat/UnSat <input type="radio"/>	Course Description (Syllabus must be attached; see Template and Guidelines) This course looks at the cultural history of Jewish representation on the American screen. These images capture the sentiment of the times in entertainment history, but also open up the social sentiments around America and the world from these creatives who are dealing with various themes of immigration, assimilation, anti-semitism, trauma, and all the ways that they overcome adversity. The media presented will cover a broad period and scope of history and culture.		
Effective Date (TERM & YEAR) Spring 2026				
Prerequisites, with minimum grade*		Corequisites	Registration Controls (Major, College, Level) N/A	
*Default minimum passing grade is D-. Prereqs., Coreqs. & Reg. Controls are enforced for all sections of course				
WAC/Gordon Rule Course <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No WAC/Gordon Rule criteria must be indicated in syllabus and approval attached to proposal. See WAC Guidelines .		Intellectual Foundations Program (General Education) Requirement (Select One Option) None General Education criteria must be indicated in the syllabus and approval attached to the proposal. See Intellectual Foundations Guidelines .		
Minimum qualifications to teach course				
M.A. or Ph.D. in Holocaust Studies, Jewish Studies, Cinema Studies or other relevant discipline				
Faculty Contact/Email/Phone Matthew Elfenbein/melfenbe@fau.edu/(561) 297-38		List/Attach comments from departments affected by new course		
Approved by Department Chair  Shane Eason College Curriculum Chair  Robin Larson College Dean  Corey Sorge UUPC Chair  Dan Meeroff Undergraduate Studies Dean _____ UFS President _____ Provost _____			Date 09.08.25 <u>09/24/2025</u> 9/25/2025 10-6-2025 10-6-2025 _____ _____	

Email this form and syllabus to mjenning@fau.edu seven business days before the UUPC meeting.



FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

FIL 4886-001 15976

Jews in American Film and Television

Date: Wednesday 9:00 PM - 12:50 PM

Building: Culture and Society Bldg. Boca **Room:** 107

4 Credit(s)

Fall 2026 - 1 Full Term

Instructor Information

Matthew Elfenbein

Email: melfenbe@fau.edu

Office: CU 209

Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Course Description

This course looks at the cultural history of Jewish representation on the American screen. These images capture the sentiment of the times in entertainment history, but also open up the social sentiments around America and the world from these creatives who are dealing with various themes of immigration, assimilation, anti-semitism, trauma, and all the ways that they overcome adversity. The media presented will cover a broad period and scope of history and culture.

Extended Course Description

The course will follow along through these themes and allow students to create linkages with formative periods of creativity, the personalities that shaped these moments, and the business that shapes American society and culture. The media presented will cover a broad period and scope of material from Classic Hollywood to Modern Day Romantic Comedies, and Avant-Garde films to television episodes depicting the Jewish experience in America. Students will form historical and cultural connections between periods in order to help them actively communicate their sentiments and how they are shaped by the media that they consume.

Instructional Method

In-Person

Traditional concept of in person. Mandatory attendance is at the discretion of the instructor.

Required Texts/Materials

- Abrams, Nathan. *The New Jew in Film: Exploring Jewishness and Judaism in Contemporary Cinema*. Rutgers University Press, 2012.
- Bernardi, Daniel, Murray Pomerance, and Hava Tirosh-Samuelson, editors. *Hollywood's Chosen People: The Jewish Experience in American Cinema*. Wayne State University Press, 2012.
- Bial, Henry. *Acting Jewish: Negotiating Ethnicity on the American Stage and Screen*. University of Michigan Press, 2005.
- Desser, David, and Lester D. Friedman. *American Jewish Filmmakers*. University of Illinois Press, 2003.
- Gabler, Neal. *An Empire of Their Own: How the Jews Invented Hollywood*. Vintage, 1989.
- Meyers, Helene. *Movie-Made Jews: An American Tradition*. Rutgers University Press, 2021.
- Pearl, Jonathan, and Judith Pearl. *The Chosen Image : Television's Portrayal of Jewish Themes and Characters*. McFarland, 1999.
- Zurawik, David. *The Jews of Primetime*. Brandeis University Press/University Press of New England, 2003.

Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes

An overview of historical and cultural events pertaining to the representation and creative force of Jewish personalities in and on film and television. These people shape the Jewish experience through these forms of popular entertainment, which is what students will uncover and analyze in order to properly communicate these ideas and images in their current society and culture. The framework focuses on close analysis of the impact that the filmmaker, actors/actresses, genre, gender, and race, political criticism, and cultural studies have on interpreting and analyzing film as art, media, and/or theory.

Students will apply critical models to the analysis of films and television. In this course, students will learn the skills and methods to:

1. Interpret the impact and relevance of history and theoretical concepts
2. Acknowledge major figures within the film studies and production field
3. Communicate an effective understanding of the concepts and materials through original interpretation and analysis
4. Create connections between various elements into coherent ideas and new understandings of the materials. Ultimately, the course is constructed to reinforce the social and interpersonal skills of verbal and written communication in today's world.

Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

Florida Atlantic University respects the rights of instructors to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions that do not impede their exercise. To ensure these rights, faculty members have the prerogative to:

- Establish and implement academic standards.
- Establish and enforce reasonable behavior standards in each class.
- Recommend disciplinary action for students whose behavior may be judged as disruptive under the Student Code of Conduct [University Regulation 4.007](#).

Disability Policy

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and follow all SAS procedures. SAS has offices across three of FAU's campuses – Boca Raton, Davie and Jupiter – however disability services are available for students on all campuses. For more information, please visit the SAS website at www.fau.edu/sas/.

Course Evaluation Method

Graded Assignments:

- Historical and Cultural Figure Presentation (25%)
 - After researching one of the Jewish personalities discussed in class, conduct a 10–15-minute presentation that details the following points:
 - Their upbringing
 - Their influence on their respective medium
 - The Jewish impact on the medium and audience
 - Their legacy and impact on society and culture
 - This presentation will feature photos, quotes, and other research in a PowerPoint format with a discussion to follow.
- Screening Discussion Lead (20%)
 - Following one of the screenings during class, students would conduct a discussion about the viewing experience, the effectiveness of the material in their pedagogical placement, how the personalities engaged with the audience, and other questions/observations with the class. This discussion will not have any visual aids, thus relying on the student's skills to deliver and communicate effectively.
- Creative Script/Pitch Project (25%)
 - This project will allow students with the creative freedom to use the material from the class to create their own media work (i.e. film or television script, pilot, short film, critical video essay, etc.) aligned with what they have learned about the

various lenses and perspectives of Jews in American Film and Television. The execution of this assignment will be approved and will be consulted with the Instructor on Record.

- **Attendance/Participation (30%)**
 - Attendance is mandatory for this course. This will be checked after the 5-minute grace period at the beginning of class and following the conclusion of that day's material. Each check will constitute half a point, so full attendance for the day will be one point.
 - The participation can be Pop Assignments, something that might be assigned during the class period. This provides the students with flexibility.

Expectations:

- **Attendance policy:** Participation and presence during the scheduled class time is MANDATORY and will be collected each period. It is also courteous to your fellow classmates and peers who might be presenting or trying to engage with the material. Excused absences will be up to the instructor's discretion, with credit recovery options on an as-needed basis.
- **Participation and Screening policy:** You should read the material before class to come prepared to discuss and engage with the lecture. You'll need to come to class to watch the film and be ready to discuss the class objectives and concepts following the screening. If you are absent or unable to view the film in class, you must locate and screen it. I am here to assist and help, but only provide screenings during class time.
- **Email policy:** Please only use Canvas Mail. I will respond to emails within 48 hours, Monday through Friday. I will still respond on Saturday and Sunday, but at my best. Please include a "Subject" in your emails and a signature with your name, and only send them using your FAU email through Canvas.
- **Screen/Screening policy:** Laptops are permitted for notetaking during the lecture. During the film screenings, NO screens are allowed to be on because of their distracting nature in the dark environment of the movie theater. Please put laptops and phones away and place any smartwatches in "Theater Mode." In addition, please refrain from conversation with others, snoring, and excessive reactions during the screening and lecture.
- **Emotions policy:** Movies are made to evoke emotions and feelings, so all emotions are welcome. This is a safe environment to express these feelings from the lecture and screening, as long as they do not immediately threaten you or your peers.

Grade Breakdown:

Historical Presentation - 25%	Creative Script - 25%
Discussion Lead - 20%	Attendance/Participation - 30%
	Total = 100%

Code of Academic Integrity

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see [University Regulation 4.001](#).

Attendance Policy Statement

Students are expected to attend all their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives as outlined by the instructor. The effect of absences upon grades is determined by the instructor, and the University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of non-attendance. Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as illness, family emergencies, military obligation, court-imposed legal obligations, or participation in University-approved activities. Examples of University-approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances, and debate activities. It is the student's responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absences and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting. Instructors must allow each student who is absent for a University-approved reason the opportunity to make up work missed without any reduction in the student's final course grade as a direct result of such absence.

Religious Accommodation Policy Statement

In accordance with the rules of the Florida Board of Education and Florida law, students have the right to reasonable accommodations from the University in order to observe religious practices and beliefs regarding admissions, registration, class attendance, and the scheduling of examinations and work assignments. University Regulation 2.007, Religious Observances, sets forth this policy for FAU and may be accessed on the FAU website at www.fau.edu/regulations.

Any student who feels aggrieved regarding religious accommodations may present a grievance to the executive director of The Office of Civil Rights and Title IX. Any such grievances will follow Florida Atlantic University's established grievance procedure regarding alleged discrimination.

Time Commitment Per Credit Hour

For traditionally delivered courses, not less than one (1) hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction each week for fifteen (15) weeks per Fall or Spring semester, and a minimum of two (2) hours of out-of-class student work for each credit hour. Equivalent time and effort are required for Summer Semesters, which usually have a shortened timeframe. Fully Online courses, hybrid, shortened, intensive format courses, and other non-traditional modes of delivery will demonstrate equivalent time and effort.

Course Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	100 - 94%
A-	< 94 - 90%
B+	< 90 - 87%
B	< 87 - 83%
B-	< 83 - 80%
C+	< 80 - 77%
C	< 77 - 73%
C-	< 73 - 70%
D+	< 70 - 67%
D	< 67 - 63%
D-	< 63 - 60%
F	< 60 - 0%

Grade Appeal Process

You may request a review of the final course grade when you believe that one of the following conditions apply:

- There was a computational or recording error in the grading.
- The grading process used non-academic criteria.
- There was a gross violation of the instructor's own grading system.

[University Regulation 4.002](#) of the University Regulations contains information on the grade appeals process

Policy on Make-up Tests, Late work, and Incompletes

The deadlines for the assignments are posted on the Course Schedule below, these dates and times can also be found for each assignment on Canvas.

Grades of Incomplete ("I") are reserved for students who are passing a course but have not completed all the required work because of exceptional circumstances.

Final grades will be based on the following breakdown. All assignments and examinations must be completed. Failure to do so will result in an "F" for the course.

Policy on the Recording of Lectures

Students enrolled in this course may record video or audio of class lectures for their own personal educational use. A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to student presentations (whether individually or as part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), labs, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, and private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the lecturer, is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation or class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct and/or the Code of Academic Integrity.

Artificial Intelligence Preamble

FAU recognizes the value of generative AI in facilitating learning. However, output generated by artificial intelligence (AI), such as written words, computations, code, artwork, images, music, etc., for example, is drawn from previously published materials and is not your own original work.

FAU students are not permitted to use AI for any course work unless explicitly allowed to do so by the instructor of the class for a specific assignment. [\[Policy 12.16 Artificial Intelligence\]](#)

Class policies related to AI use are decided by the individual faculty. Some faculty may permit the use of AI in some assignments but not others, and some faculty may prohibit the use of AI in their course entirely. In the case that an instructor permits the use of AI for some assignments, the assignment instructions will indicate when and how the use of AI is permitted in that specific assignment. It is the student's responsibility to comply with the instructor's expectations for each assignment in each course. When AI is authorized, the student is also responsible and accountable for the content of the work. AI may generate inaccurate, false, or exaggerated information. Users should approach any generated content with skepticism and review any information generated by AI before using generated content as-is.

If you are unclear about whether or not the use of AI is permitted, ask your instructor before starting the assignment.

Failure to comply with the requirements related to the use of AI may constitute a violation of the [Florida Atlantic Code of Academic Integrity, Regulation 4.001](#).

Proper Citation: If the use of AI is permitted for a specific assignment, then use of the AI tool must be properly documented and cited. For more information on how to properly cite the use of AI tools, visit <https://fau.edu/ai/citation>

AI Language Specific To This Course

AI Flexible: The use of AI to assist in work assigned in this specific course is permitted only for specific assignments as indicated by the instructor. Use must be properly documented and cited per instructor guidelines (<https://fau.edu/ai/citation>).

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center

Life as a university student can be challenging physically, mentally and emotionally. Students who find stress negatively affecting their ability to achieve academic or personal goals may wish to consider utilizing FAU's Counseling and Psychological Services (**CAPS**) Center. CAPS provides FAU students a range of services – individual counseling, support meetings, and psychiatric services, to name a few – offered to help improve and maintain emotional well-being. For more information, go to <http://www.fau.edu/counseling/>

Student Support Services and Online Resources

- [Center for Learning and Student Success \(CLASS\)](#)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)
- [FAU Libraries](#)
- [Office of Information Technology Helpdesk](#)
- [Center for Global Engagement](#)
- [Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry \(OURI\)](#)
- [Student Accessibility Services](#)
- [Student Athlete Success Center \(SASC\)](#)
- [Testing and Certification](#)
- [Test Preparation](#)
- [University Academic Advising Services](#)

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

The CTL has a variety of FREE TUTORING and other academic support services to help you succeed in your courses. You are encouraged to build your academic support team early in the term and meet with your team regularly. At the CTL, you can practice difficult course content, develop skills, and learn academic success strategies – in person and online. Learn more about FAU academic support at www.fau.edu/ctl.

- FREE writing support is offered for this course through the **University Center for Excellence in Writing (UCEW)** at the CTL. Visit fau.edu/ucew to learn more.
- FREE speaking and presentation support is offered for this course through the **Speaking Center**. Visit fau.edu/speakingcenter to learn more.
- FREE eTutoring and eSuccess coaching is available for students taking online courses. Visit fau.edu/esuccess to learn more.

Course Topical Outline

COURSE SCHEDULE (Subject to Change without Notice)

Week 1 – Introduction/Syllabus

- Reading: Bernardi: “Introduction: The Hollywood Question”
- Screening: *An American Tail* (dir. Don Bluth, 1986)

Week 2 – Film and the Hollywood Moguls

- Reading: Gabler: Introduction, Chapter 1
- Screening: *The Jazz Singer* (dir. Alan Crosland, 1927)

Week 3 – Anti-Semitism in the Early Film Industry

- Reading: Gabler: Chapter 3
- Screening: *Cabaret* (dir. Bob Fosse, 1972)

Week 4 – Jews in World War II

- Reading: Bial: Chapter 1
- Screening: *To Be or Not to Be* (dir. Ernst Lubitsch, 1942)

Week 5 – Jews in the Cold War/McCarthy Era

- Reading: Bial: Chapter 2
- Screening: *The Way We Were* (dir. Sydney Pollack, 1973)

Week 6 – Jews and Reconciliation of History

- Reading: Bernardi: Portuges: “Jewish Immigrant Directors and Their Impact on Hollywood”
- Screening: *The Producers* (dir. Mel Brooks, 1967)

Week 7 – Post-War Independent/Avant-Garde New York

- Reading: Meyers: Chapter 4
- Screening: Various Screenings of Avant-Garde Cinema

Week 8 – Jewish Creatives in the 1970s

- Reading: Abrams: Chapter 2
- Screening: *Hester Street* (dir. Joan Micklin Silver, 1975)

Week 9 – Jewish Creatives in the 1970s (Woody Allen)

- Reading: Abrams: Chapter 1
- Screening: *Manhattan* (dir. Woody Allen, 1979)

Week 10 – Jewish Comedy of the 1980s

- Reading: Meyers: Chapter 5
- Screening: *To Be or Not to Be* (dir. Alan Johnson, 1983)

Week 11 – Anti-Semitism of the 1990s

- Reading: Bernardi: Dixon: “Joseph Breen, the Hollywood Production Code, and Institutionalized Anti-Semitism in Hollywood”
- Screening: *School Ties* (dir. Robert Mandel, 1992)

Week 12 – Children’s Television

- Reading: Pearl: Chapter 1
- Screening: *A Rugrats Passover* (dirs. Jim Duffy, Jeff McGrath, Steve Socki, 1995)

Week 13 – Jews on Television

- Reading: Zurawik: Chapter 4
- Screening: Various Episodes of *The Nanny*, *Seinfeld*, *Will & Grace*, etc.

Week 14 – Contemporary Jewish Directors

- Reading: Abrams: Chapter 4
- Screening: *A Serious Man* (dir. Ethan Coen & Joel Coen, 2009)

Week 15 – Contemporary Jewish Actors

- Reading: Meyers: Chapter 6 & 7
- Screening: *Don’t Mess with the Zohan* (dir. Dennis Dugan, 2008)

Week 16 – Contemporary Jewish Genres

- Reading: Abrams: Conclusion
- Screening: *Shiva Baby* (dir. Emma Seligman, 2020)

Title IX Statement

In any case involving allegations of sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report the matter to the University Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX (OCR9). If University faculty become aware of an allegation of sexual misconduct, they are expected to report it to OCR9. If a report is made, someone from OCR9 and/or Campus Victim Services will contact you to make you aware of available resources including support services, supportive measures, and the University’s grievance procedures. More information, including contact information for OCR9, is available at <https://www.fau.edu/ocr9/title-ix/>. You may also contact Victim Services at victimservices@fau.edu or 561-297-0500 (ask to speak to an Advocate) or schedule an appointment with a counselor at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) by calling 561-297-CAPS.