

The Michael & Irene Ross Program in Jewish Studies
Proudly Presents

JEWISH STUDIES

Fall 2026

Any City College student is welcome, but if you are registered this semester for a Jewish Studies course, here's a way to earn extra credit for your class:

Each of the following club hour events begins on **Thursdays at 12 noon** with pizza and drinks (yes there is such a thing as a free lunch). The event itself runs from 12:30 till 1:30. *All events are in the Jewish Studies major's lounge: NAC 5-202.*

Come to each event, submit a short one-page response paper to your Jewish Studies prof, and you can earn up to 1% extra credit for each event you attend. (The fine print: if you are taking two or more classes in JWST, this can be submitted to only one class.) It adds up fast and can make the difference between one grade and a higher one.

Now for the very cool stuff:

Thursday, September 10th: Dr. Marisa Hollywood

Internships for Humanities Majors



Join Dr. Marisa Hollywood, HI Program Director, as she discusses the criteria for participating in the program and opportunities open to Humanities majors for the Fall 2026 semester. Then she will present tips for drafting a winning resume and cover letter, ideas for portfolio development, and review email and interview etiquette. Take the next step in planning for your future career!

Thursday, September 17th: Will Steinberger & David Winitsky

The Jewish Plays Project: The Crazy Ten-Minute Drama Workshop



Join the conversation about Jewish life on campus and participate together in the one-of-a-kind Jewish Plays Project right here. JPP leaders will create focus groups and talking circles (à la Ms. Steinem, RIP) to hash out and solve difficult issues through community discussion and, ultimately, artistic expression... through the development and creation of ten-minute plays! This workshop will offer students a real chance to harness the campus

zeitgeist and generate an idea for a future dramatic masterpiece!

Thursday, September 24th: Sukkah Party

The First Annual Jewish Studies Sukkah Party



Celebrate Sukkot, Sponsored by Hillel

Ever eaten inside an open-air hut surrounded by decorations, autumn air, and fantastic food? Welcome to **Sukkot**, the ultimate fall harvest!

Thursday, October 1st: Dr. Ricky Hidary

Dispute for the Sake of Heaven: Legal Pluralism in the Talmud

This lecture traces a 2,000-year argument within the Jewish tradition over how to manage internal debate within a single community or nation. Reading from the earliest rabbinic texts through medieval codes and into modern debates over immigration, liturgy, and competing ethnic customs, we will examine the tension between a biblical prohibition on "forming factions" and a countervailing conviction that recorded dissent and diverse practice are essential to the tradition's vitality.



Thursday, October 8th: Ian Cohen

When Jewish Identity Becomes Art



This event will begin with a short presentation of Ian's art and journey, followed by an interactive workshop where attendees will create their own unique piece of art highlighting aspects of their own identities and backgrounds. While there is no experience or artistic ability necessary to participate, users should be comfortable working with scissors and water based adhesives. Attendees are encouraged to bring any small photos (copies recommended), magazine pages, or text they are willing to cut or use in a collage. Ian Menachem Cohen is a conceptual artist and Jewish educator, whose work fuses elements of identity, history, language, story telling, and Jewish pride.

Thursday, October 15th: Daniel Kratka, Esq.

“So Help Me God”: My Life As A Criminal Defense Attorney in New York City



Ever wonder what “innocent until proven guilty” truly means? Come for the pizza and stay for a sidebar to learn how an observant criminal lawyer crafts his legal defenses while existing within the parameters of the penal code and contemporary *halacha*. With his JD from Brooklyn Law School and an early career in the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office, Daniel Kratka, member of the bar in NY and NJ, is the founder of Kratka Law Group, LLC. He practices criminal law and family law, among other specialties. He’s proud to be privy to firsthand knowledge of our stellar Jewish Studies students and faculty.

Thursday, October 22nd: Dr. Elik Elhanan & Danielle Al Hassid
Between Contemporary Art & the Archive



In this talk, artist Danielle Alhassid and Prof. Elik Elhanan explore the relationship between stop-motion animation, contemporary art, and Yiddish modernism. Working collaboratively across art and scholarship, they develop research-based artistic projects that bring together archival research and moving image.

The conversation will include a preview of their upcoming exhibition in collaboration with the CCNY Library Archive’s Special Collections, as well as an introduction to previous projects in New York, Amsterdam, and Venice.



Thursday, October 29th: Rabbi Katja Vehlow

Women in the Rabbinate: From Regina Jonas to Abby Stein



From Regina Jonas — secretly ordained in 1935 Berlin and killed at Auschwitz decades before her story was ever told — to today's roughly 1,500 ordained women rabbis, this talk traces the history of women's leadership in the rabbinate. We'll look at some of the key milestones across the Reform, Reconstructionist, and Conservative movements, where women have led congregations for decades, as well as the more contested path in Orthodoxy

through Yeshivat Maharat and other institutions. We'll examine where the glass ceiling still holds, and what the ongoing fight over titles reveals about power, tradition, and change.

Rabbi Katja Vehlow, Ph.D., is the Jewish chaplain and campus rabbi at Fordham University.

Thursday, November 5th: Joshua Halberstam, Ph.D.

A Sartorial History of the Jews



From Yemen to Manhattan, from ancient days to now, this talk traces how Jews have dressed by choice and by coercion — and what those clothes reveal about faith, survival, and belonging.

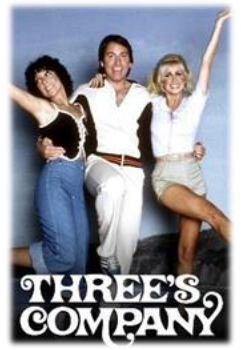
Dr. Joshua Halberstam has published widely in his field, philosophy, and is also the author of a novel, *A Seat at the Table*, about a young man growing up in Chassidic New York, and a collection of Chassidic tales translated from

Yiddish, *The Blind Angel*, among other books. He teaches Jewish philosophy in the Jewish Studies Program at CCNY.

Thursday, November 12th: Presented by Amy Kratka, Ph.D.

**“Come & Knock On Our Door”: The Mickey Ross
Hollywood Watch Party**

Join us as we honor the legacy & Hollywood roots of The CCNY Jewish Studies Program’s very own Michael “Mickey” Ross! Screenwriter and producer of *All in the Family* and *Three’s Company*, Ross was awarded an Emmy in 1973 for Writing a Comedy Series. We will be screening select episodes from 2 of his most iconic productions, curated by our director, Dr. Amy Kratka.
You won’t want to miss this one!



**Thursday, November 19th: Soferet Leana Tapnack
Hebrew Scribal Arts**



Our tradition teaches that there is a letter in a Torah scroll for each person. But how can we connect to Torah in a more intimate and personal way? With Soferet (ritual scribe) Leana Tapnack, we’ll discover some of the intricacies within traditional Hebrew scribal arts and dive deeper into what it means to find ourselves in Torah.

Soferet Leana Jelen Tapnack is a scribe based in Manhattan. She teaches *Safrus* (scribal arts) classes in her home, and loves watching her students grow and blossom in their skills. Leana specializes in Torah scroll and *tefillin* repair and *ketuba* work, and is the director of the Women’s Tefillin Gemach, a lending library of *tefillin* for individuals looking to explore the *mitzvah*. Leana lives with her wife, their two sons, and their dog on the Upper West Side.

Thursday, December 3rd: Prof. Terry Wasserman

Inside Sacred Space



Where did Jesus pray? Yes! The Jerusalem Temple for sure, but he wasn't always in Jerusalem! Before there were mega-churches, before cathedrals, there were synagogues. These were and still are places of study and prayer, but have they always looked the same? These houses of worship vary widely both in appearance and in how they are used. In this talk, we will look at how the space transformed the use and the use defined the space. We will look at these holy places as they once stood and see what still remains. Professor Wasserman will be teaching “Jesus the Jew” and “The Bible as Literature” in the spring.