

## Worry & Wonder: Jewish Politics, Religion and Culture in Canada

Professor David Koffman

HIST 4581 6.0, Y

2020-2021

### **What You Will Learn:**

This course will outline the dynamic, ever-changing Canadian Jewish experience from the colonial era orbit, through the turn of the digital age - some 250 years. It explores the great diversity of Canadian Jewry: its variety in ethnicity, class and religious practice, its regional variations in small towns, farms, factory & mining towns, and in roaring cities, coast to coast. The course emphasizes the ruptures and wonders of mass migration, religious and political tensions among Canadian Jews from the 1940s through the 1980s, and the ways in which Jews negotiated relationships with non-Jews in Canada, as well as its politics, its landscape, its race relations, its religious spheres, and eventually, its embrace of multiculturalism. It will touch on Canadian Jewry's relations with the State of Israel, anti-Semitism, and the political, economic and cultural contributions Jews have made to Canadian life, always placing the Canadian Jewish experience in the broader context of global Jewish life.

### **How You Will Learn:**

This is a seminar: it will include short synchronous lectures, student-lead discussions & a year-long original research project. During the first term, lectures and discussions will be punctuated with digital research workshops, and guest lecture appearances from leading scholars of Canadian Jewish life. Throughout the course students will engage with primary sources including newspapers, memoirs, obituaries, photographs, maps, poetry, and other archival and cultural materials. Throughout the year, step by step, students will develop, draft, revise, and eventually present an original research paper based on their own unique interests, thereby adding new knowledge of and understanding to Canadian Jewish life.

### **Mode of Delivery:**

This course will be offered remotely, with a mix of synchronous and asynchronous learning. The course will meet live, through Zoom, during the scheduled course time, Tuesdays from 11:15am to 2pm.

- All of the readings for this course will be available, for free, through the York University Library website or online. Links will be provided on the course Moodle site.
- Assignments will be submitted, graded, and returned electronically.
- All of the research materials used for the research paper will be available online.

### **Tentative Evaluation Scheme:**

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|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| • Find and Discuss a Primary Source | 10%. Late September |
| • Analyzing the Field               | 10%. Mid-October    |
| • Research Proposal                 | 10%, Mid November   |
| • Leading Seminar Discussion        | 10% Turn-Taking     |
| • Research Project First Draft      | 20% Mid-February    |
| • Peer Review Report                | 5%, Late February   |

- Revisions of Research Paper 15%, Late March
- Final Edits & Presentation 10%, Mid-April
- Overall Participation 10% Ongoing

**Tentative Course Schedule:**

WEEK:

1. Introduction: Themes and Structuring Tensions
2. Colonial Jewish Life, Atlantic World
3. The Age of Migration
4. Tour, Introduction to the Ontario Jewish Archives
5. Jewries at the Margins
6. The "Special Case" of Jews in Quebec
7. Labour, Socialism & the Further Left
8. Research Week
9. Zionism on these Shores
10. Anti-Semitism & Immigration Restriction in Canada
11. Uptown/Downtown
12. The Field of Canadian Jewish Studies & Proposal Workshop
13. During the War
14. In the Wake of the Holocaust: Political, Cultural and Religious Responses
15. Research Week
16. Canadian Jewry in the 60s
17. Religious Choices
18. Multiculturalism & Its Discontents
19. Jews & Quebec Nationalism.
20. Toronto Jewry: Concentration and Suburbanization
21. Canada's Israel
22. The "New" Immigration: Israelis, Russians, North Africans
23. Contemporary Canadian Jewish Culture
24. Final Submission Conference