
Term Information

Effective Term Autumn 2026

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area Yiddish
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org Germanic Languages & Lit - D0547
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences
Level/Career Graduate, Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog 5201
Course Title Yiddish Literature
Transcript Abbreviation Yiddish Literature
Course Description This seminar explores various aspects of Yiddish literature, from its early modern beginnings to its height in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and then its subsequent lives and afterlives in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Texts are taught in translation into English; advanced students are encouraged to read texts in the original.
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3

Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week, 12 Week, 8 Week, 7 Week, 6 Week, 4 Week
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No
Grading Basis Letter Grade
Repeatable No
Course Components Lecture
Grade Roster Component Lecture
Credit Available by Exam No
Admission Condition Course No
Off Campus Never
Campus of Offering Columbus, Lima, Mansfield, Marion, Newark, Wooster

Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites
Exclusions Repeatable, up to 3 times.
Electronically Enforced Yes

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 16.0599
Subsidy Level Doctoral Course
Intended Rank Junior, Senior, Masters, Doctoral

Requirement/Elective Designation

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

Course Details

- Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes** • see syllabus, pp. 2-4
- Content Topic List** • see syllabus, pp. 2-4
- Sought Concurrence** No

Attachments

- Yiddish 5201 proposed syllabus 13 Feb 2026.pdf: Yiddish 5201 Syllabus
(Syllabus. Owner: Miller, Natascha)

Comments

- Non-GE course. *(by Miller, Natascha on 02/16/2026 04:05 PM)*

Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Miller, Natascha	02/16/2026 04:11 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Taleghani-Nikazm, Carmen	02/16/2026 05:15 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal	02/22/2026 05:20 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Jenkins, Mary Ellen Bigler Neff, Jennifer Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal Wade, Macy Joy Steele, Rachel Lea	02/22/2026 05:20 PM	ASCCAO Approval

Course number: Yiddish 5201
Course title: Yiddish Literature

Format: In-person seminar, 3 contact-hours a week
Repeatable, up to 3 times
Course meeting time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:45pm-2:05pm
Meeting location: Hagerty 488

Instructor: Saul Zaritt
Degrees: Ph.D., Jewish Literature, The Jewish Theological Seminary, 2015; M.A., Hebrew Literature, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2009; A.B., Comparative Literature, The University of Chicago, 2004
Email: zaritt.1@osu.edu
Office: Hagerty 421
Office hours: by appointment

Course description: This seminar explores various aspects of Yiddish literature, from its early modern beginnings to its height in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and then its subsequent lives and afterlives in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Texts are taught in translation into English; advanced students are encouraged to read texts in the original.

Course materials: All texts will be available digitally on the Carmen course site.

Assignments

All students: Each course meeting (except for the first one) asks you to have read a set of texts prior to class and to come ready to talk about them. You may also be assigned certain background readings and secondary scholarship to provide context for our discussion. You are required to attend class, and it is part of your participation grade. Please notify the instructor if you need to miss class.

The weekly question assignment: the evening before the first class of the week you will post in the appropriate discussion forum on Carmen, one question about one of that day's texts. This question can be as short as a sentence or as long as a paragraph. It should not be an informational question about something you could google or discover through research. Rather, please share what irked you about a certain text, what you're curious about as you come to class, what question asked by the text got you thinking. The instructor's response will likely be in the form of another question.

Graduate students are required to write a seminar paper in this course, supported by regular meetings during the semester with the instructor. The paper will be broken down into smaller parts: topic proposal and research question; bibliography construction; initial drafting and peer review; final paper (7k-10k words). The topic of the paper must be related to the course but can also dovetail with a student's current research interests. The grade for the seminar paper counts for 70% of your grade for the course. Class participation counts for 15% and the question assignment counts for the remaining 15%.

Alternative graduate translation project: a significant amount of translation of a Yiddish text with a critical introduction. Details to be determined in consultation with the instructor.

Undergraduates The first paper (5-6 pages, 1,500-2,000 words) will be based on one of our exchanges of questions, reformulated as a paper topic in consultation with the instructor. This assignment will be due in the middle of the semester. The second assignment, to be turned in during the exam period, will be a 9–10-page paper (3,000 words) based on a range of prompts to be provided or a different topic in consultation with the instructor. Finally, there will be a take home final due on the course's exam day. The papers each count for 30% of your grade; participation counts for 15%; non-graded assignments (the questions) count for 15%; and the take-home final 10%.

Alternative undergraduate second writing assignment: translate a Yiddish short story and provide a critical introduction; or write your own original short story *as if* it was originally in Yiddish.

Grading scale

93–100: A

90–92.9: A-

87–89.9: B+

83–86.9: B

80–82.9: B-

77–79.9: C+

73–76.9: C

70–72.9: C-

67–69.9: D+

60–66.9: D-

Below 60: E

The course will have rotating topics based on genre or theme (the Yiddish short story or the Yiddish novel; Yiddish poetry; gender in Yiddish literature, etc.). Below is a sample devoted to the Yiddish short story.

Schedule of Readings

Introduction to Yiddish Storytelling—Folktales, Treasuries, and Confessions

Jacob ben Abraham of Mezritch, from *The Mayse Book* (1602)

A selection of Hershele Ostropolyer Stories (18th-19th century)

Background: <https://encyclopedia.yivo.org/article/1355>.

Unit I – A Tale of Many Origins

The Translated Fable

Reb Moshe Wallich, selections from *Book of Fables* (1697)

Selections from Chelm Stories

Background information here: <https://encyclopedia.yivo.org/article/2175>.

Nakhman's Fables

Rebbe Nakhman of Bratslav stories, "The Khakham and the Tam," "The Rabbi's Son," and "The King Who Decreed Conversion"

Background: <https://encyclopedia.yivo.org/article/1232>.

“Maybe your Jewishness is stories”: The Paradox of the Modern Yiddish Short Story

I.L. Peretz: “Stories” (1903)

February 9: Theorizing the Short Story

David Roskies, "The Story's the Thing" in *What is Jewish Literature* (1994)

Mary Louise Pratt, “The Short Story: The Long and Short of It,” *Poetics* 10 (1981): 175–94

Unit II – “Now, what were we saying?” The Yiddish Short Story and the Monologue

Bushels and Baskets of Stories

Sholem Aleichem: “The Pot” (1901)

Background: <https://encyclopedia.yivo.org/article/27>. and <https://encyclopedia.yivo.org/article/1142>.

Sholem Aleichem: On Account of a Hat” [Treasury] (1913), (trans. Sacvan Bercovitch), and “Baranovich Station” (1909)

Ghosts, Demons, and Saints

Peretz: “The Dead Town” (1895) [Treasury]

Yenta Serdatsky, "A Heart Gone Cold: A Monologue" (1920)

Isaac Bashevis Singer: “Gimpel the Fool” (1945) [Treasury] (trans. Saul Bellow)

Isaac Bashevis Singer: “The Last Demon” (1959) (trans. Martha Glicklich and Cecile Hemley)

Unit III – Realism vs. Modernist Experimentation

Realist Miniatures

Sholem Asch: “Kola Street” (1905) [Treasury]

Fradel Shtok: “The Veil” (1919)

Joseph Opatoshu: “A Lynching” (1922) (trans. Jessica Kirzane), <https://ingeveb.org/texts-and-translations/a-lynching>.

Impressionism and Homelessness

David Bergelson: “In a Backwoods Town” (1914) [Treasury]

Chana Blankshteyn, "Fear" (1939) (trans. Anita Norich)

Blume Lempel: “The Debt” (1972) (trans. Ellen Cassedy and Yermiyahu Ahron

Taub), <https://ingeveb.org/texts-and-translations/the-debt>.

The Fable Deconstructed

Peretz, "Revelation; Or, the Story of the Billy Goat" (1904)

Der Nister: "Behind a Fence" (1929) and "Beheaded" (1922)
Marc Caplan, "Performance Anxieties: Carnival Spaces and Assemblages in Der Nister's 'Under a Fence'" *Prooftexts* 18,
no. 1 (1998): 1–18.

The Author, Deconstructed

Yente Serdatsky: "Unchanged" (1913)
Bergelson: "Among Refugees" (1923)
Yenta Mash: "Erika" (2007)

Unit IV – Storytelling after Disaster

Surviving to Tell the Tale

Sholem Aleichem, "The Wedding that Came Without Its Band" (1909)
L. Shapiro: "White Challah" (1919) [Treasurey]
Rokhl Korn: "The Road of No Return" (1957)
Isaac Bashevis Singer: "The Lecture" (1965)

Yiddish After Yiddish

Yosl Birshsteyn: "The Letter" (1959), <https://shortstoryproject.com/stories/the-letter/>.
Blume Lempel: "Correspondents" (1992)
Mikhoel Felsenbaum: "Hallo" (2008)
Ethel Niborski, "Letters to a Blind Grandfather" (2019)

Conclusions

Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller" (1936)

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

Tone and civility: Our goal is a supportive learning community where everyone feels safe and where people can disagree amicably. Above all, please remember to be respectful and thoughtful.

Written assignments: Your written assignments, including discussion posts, should be your own original work. In formal assignments, you should follow MLA or Chicago style to cite the ideas and words of any research sources. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your assignments before you turn them in—but no one else should revise or rewrite your work.

Reusing past work: In general, you are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you've explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me.

Collaboration and informal peer-review: Study groups are encouraged, but remember that comparing answers on a quiz, exam, or assignment is not permitted. If you're unsure about a particular situation, please feel free just to ask ahead of time.

Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the

Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute Academic Misconduct.

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University or subvert the educational process. Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so please review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If an instructor suspects that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, the instructor is obligated by University Rules to report those suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that a student violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in the course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If students have questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, they should contact the instructor.

Artificial Intelligence and Academic Integrity

There has been a significant increase in the popularity and availability of a variety of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, including ChatGPT, Sudowrite, and others. These tools will help shape the future of work, research and technology, but when used in the wrong way, they can stand in conflict with academic integrity at Ohio State.

All students have important obligations under the Code of Student Conduct to complete all academic and scholarly activities with fairness and honesty. Our professional students also have the responsibility to uphold the professional and ethical standards found in their respective academic honor codes. Specifically, students are not to use unauthorized assistance in the laboratory, on field work, in scholarship, or on a course assignment unless such assistance has been authorized specifically by the course instructor. In addition, students are not to submit their work without acknowledging any word-for-word use and/or paraphrasing of writing, ideas or other work that is not your own. These requirements apply to all students undergraduate, graduate, and professional.

To maintain a culture of integrity and respect, these generative AI tools should not be used in the completion of course assignments unless an instructor for a given course specifically authorizes their use. Some instructors may approve of using generative AI tools in the academic setting for specific goals. However, these tools should be used only with the explicit and clear permission of each individual instructor, and then only in the ways allowed by the instructor.

Religious Accommodations

Ohio State has had a longstanding practice of making reasonable academic accommodations for students' religious beliefs and practices in accordance with applicable law. In 2023, Ohio State updated its practice to align with new state legislation. Under this new provision, students must be in early communication with their instructors regarding any known accommodation requests

for religious beliefs and practices, providing notice of specific dates for which they request alternative accommodations within 14 days after the first instructional day of the course. Instructors in turn shall not question the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system in reviewing such requests and shall keep requests for accommodations confidential. With sufficient notice, instructors will provide students with reasonable alternative accommodations with regard to examinations and other academic requirements with respect to students' sincerely held religious beliefs and practices by allowing up to three absences each semester for the student to attend or participate in religious activities. Examples of religious accommodations can include, but are not limited to, rescheduling an exam, altering the time of a student's presentation, allowing make-up assignments to substitute for missed class work, or flexibility in due dates or research responsibilities. If concerns arise about a requested accommodation, instructors are to consult their tenure initiating unit head for assistance. A student's request for time off shall be provided if the student's sincerely held religious belief or practice severely affects the student's ability to take an exam or meet an academic requirement and the student has notified their instructor, in writing during the first 14 days after the course begins, of the date of each absence. Although students are required to provide notice within the first 14 days after a course begins, instructors are strongly encouraged to work with the student to provide a reasonable accommodation if a request is made outside the notice period. A student may not be penalized for an absence approved under this policy. If students have questions or disputes related to academic accommodations, they should contact their course instructor, and then their department or college office. For questions or to report discrimination or harassment based on religion, individuals should contact the Civil Rights Compliance Office. Policy: [Religious Holidays, Holy Days and Observances](#).

Disability Statement (with Accommodations for Illness)

The university strives to maintain a healthy and accessible environment to support student learning in and out of the classroom. If students anticipate or experience academic barriers based on a disability (including mental health and medical conditions, whether chronic or temporary), they should let their instructor know immediately so that they can privately discuss options. Students do not need to disclose specific information about a disability to faculty. To establish reasonable accommodations, students may be asked to register with Student Life Disability Services (see below for campus-specific contact information). After registration, students should make arrangements with their instructors as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that accommodations may be implemented in a timely fashion.

If students are ill and need to miss class, including if they are staying home and away from others while experiencing symptoms of viral infection or fever, they should let their instructor know immediately. In cases where illness interacts with an underlying medical condition, please consult with Student Life Disability Services to request reasonable accommodations: slds@osu.edu, <https://slds.osu.edu/>, 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Ave, 614-292-3307

Intellectual Diversity

Ohio State is committed to fostering a culture of open inquiry and intellectual diversity within the classroom. This course will cover a range of information and may include discussions or debates about controversial issues, beliefs, or policies. Any such discussions and debates are intended to support understanding of the approved curriculum and relevant course objectives

rather than promote any specific point of view. Students will be assessed on principles applicable to the field of study and the content covered in the course. Preparing students for citizenship includes helping them develop critical thinking skills that will allow them to reach their own conclusions regarding complex or controversial matters.

Grievances and Solving Problems

According to University Policies, if you have a problem with this class, you should seek to resolve the grievance concerning a grade or academic practice by speaking first with the instructor or professor. Then, if necessary, take your case to the department chairperson, college dean or associate dean, and to the provost, in that order. Specific procedures are outlined in Faculty Rule 3335-8-23. Grievances against graduate, research, and teaching assistants should be submitted first to the supervising instructor, then to the chairperson of the assistant's department.

Creating an Environment Free from Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Misconduct

The Ohio State University is committed to building and maintaining a welcoming community. All Buckeyes have the right to be free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct. Ohio State does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, pregnancy (childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom), race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, academic programs, admission, and employment. Members of the university community also have the right to be free from all forms of sexual misconduct: sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation. To report harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation and/or seek confidential and non-confidential resources and supportive measures, contact the Civil Rights Compliance Office (CRCO): Online reporting form: <http://civilrights.osu.edu/>. or Call 614-247-5838 or TTY 614-688-8605, civilrights@osu.edu.

The university is committed to stopping sexual misconduct, preventing its recurrence, eliminating any hostile environment, and remedying its discriminatory effects. All university employees have reporting responsibilities to the Civil Rights Compliance Office to ensure the university can take appropriate action:

- All university employees, except those exempted by legal privilege of confidentiality or expressly identified as a confidential reporter, have an obligation to report incidents of sexual assault immediately.
- The following employees have an obligation to report all other forms of sexual misconduct as soon as practicable but at most within five workdays of becoming aware of such information: 1. Any human resource professional (HRP); 2. Anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers; 3. Chair/director; and 4. Faculty member.

Content Warning Language

Some content in this course may involve media that may elicit a traumatic response in some students due to descriptions of and/or scenes depicting acts of violence, acts of war, or sexual violence and its aftermath. This course also includes discussion of potentially offensive racial and ethnic stereotypes. If needed, please take care of yourself while watching/reading this material (leaving classroom to take a water/bathroom break, debriefing with a friend, contacting a confidential Sexual Violence Advocate 614-267-7020, or Counseling and Consultation Services

at 614-292-5766 and contacting the instructor if needed). Expectations are that we all will be respectful of our classmates while consuming this media and that we will create a safe space for each other. Failure to show respect to each other may result in dismissal from the class.