News Release:  
For immediate use

Symposium at UNC-Chapel Hill to explore the traditions and trends in Jewish Food

(Chapel Hill, N.C. – February 3, 2017) – The Carolina Center for Jewish Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is hosting a two-day symposium March 4-5, to explore Jewish food in the global south. The symposium, which is open to the campus community and general public, will include a cooking class held at Southern Season, a film festival at The Varsity and a full day of panel discussions and a keynote address. More than 20 guest speakers, including James Beard award-winning chefs, academic scholars, journalists and documentarians will participate in the program.

Appealing to both public and academic audiences, this symposium will investigate what makes a food “Jewish” in the diverse social and cultural contexts of our global markets and networks, and how that designation affects the lives of its creators and consumers. Through examination of specific foods such as pastrami, iconic dishes such as hummus, and particular cooking traditions that negotiate the laws of kashrut, participants will discuss how the distinct social and economic dimensions of different regional cultures, including the American South, determine how Jewish foods are prepared, sold, consumed, celebrated, and interpreted.

The weekend kicks off Saturday, March 4 at 11 a.m. with a Jewish foods cooking class held at Southern Season with journalist Joan Nathan, author of the upcoming “King Solomon’s Table: A Culinary Exploration of Jewish Cooking from Around the World” and many other books on Jewish culinary topics. Cost is $50 and pre-registration is required. Saturday afternoon features a film festival at The Varsity. The screenings will be from 4-7p.m. with “Streit’s Matzo and the American Dream” beginning at 4p.m. and “Deli-Man” beginning at 5:30p.m. The film screenings are free and open to the public, no tickets or registration required.

On Sunday, March 5, four panel discussions will focus on the changing scene of the American Jewish deli, the history of the Jewish kitchen, evolving ingredients and reinvention of Jewish dishes, and contemporary expressions of Jewish global southern cuisine. The day concludes with a keynote salon with New York Times journalist Kim Severson, author and journalist Joan Nathan and James Beard award-winning chef Alon Shaya of Shaya Restaurant in New Orleans. Pre-registration is required for the Sunday symposium. Cost is $10 for general admission and free for UNC students and this includes lunch, an afternoon reception and refreshment breaks.

The full conference schedule and online registration can be found at: http://jewishstudies.unc.edu

The symposium is hosted by UNC’s Carolina Center for Jewish Studies, supported by a private gift from Jimmy and Susan Pittleman, and co-sponsored by the Department of American Studies, Center for Global Initiatives / Global Research Institute, the Center for the Study of the American South, the College of Arts and Sciences and UNC’s FOOD FOR ALL pan-university academic theme.

-more-
The symposium was organized by professors Marcie Cohen Ferris and Gabrielle Berlinger of the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies and the Department of American Studies. Jewish Food in the Global South is also part of the new series for the humanities—Carolina’s Human Heart—launched by the College of Arts and Sciences for the academic year 2016–17.

-Carolina-

About the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies
Established in 2003, the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill promotes a deeper understanding of Jewish history, culture and thought through its teaching, research and community outreach initiatives. With a Bachelor of Arts undergraduate degree program and a certificate in Jewish Studies for graduate students, undergraduate minors in Jewish Studies and Modern Hebrew, more than 20 affiliated faculty members, more than 1,300 students taking Jewish Studies courses each year, and an active outreach program and popular lecture series, the Center is a dynamic resource on campus and beyond. Looking ahead, the Center has ambitious goals for expanding academic opportunities for Carolina’s students and the community. To learn more, please visit our Web site at: jewishstudies.unc.edu.

Carolina Center for Jewish Studies contact:
Karen M. Gajewski, (919) 962-1509, kgajewski@unc.edu