

CAROLINA
CENTER
for JEWISH
STUDIES

FALL 2021 NEWS FROM THE CENTER

UNC-Chapel Hill, Campus Box 3152, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3152

Keep Connected: Visit our web site at jewishstudies.unc.edu for more information. If you'd like to receive email updates about upcoming events, please join our listserv by emailing us at jewishstudies@unc.edu or signing up via our web site. We're also @uncjewishstudies on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram, Pinterest, and LinkedIn and our social media links are available at jewishstudies.unc.edu.

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Congratulations, 2021 Graduates!



We are so proud of all our graduating undergraduate students — including those who have earned the B.A. in religious studies/Jewish studies, a minor in Jewish studies or modern Hebrew, and the many students who have participated in JWST courses and programming.

We also wish to congratulate our 2020–2021 Ph.D. graduates! This semester:

- **Robin Buller** successfully defended her dissertation "Sephardi Immigrants in Paris: Navigating Jewish Community, Culture, and Citizenship, 1918–1945";
- **Lea Greenberg** defended her dissertation "Curious Daughters: Language, Literacy, and Jewish Female Desire in German and Yiddish Literature from 1793 to 1916"; and
- **Max Lazar** defended his dissertation "Jerusalem on the Main: Jewish Integration in Frankfurt, 1914–1938".

Congratulations, and best of luck with your upcoming career positions as a post-doc, visiting professor, and history teacher.

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NEWS FROM THE CENTER FALL 2021

Exploring Career Options

Post-Doctorate Fellowships

In the upcoming years, the Center hopes to create opportunities for recent Jewish studies graduates to continue their work at Carolina by way of post-doctorate fellowship positions. Many of the Center's graduate students have moved on to other universities for post-doc positions, but the Center does not offer any of these transitional fellowships. This type of position is a win-win, as it gives the scholar time to further develop teaching and writing skills before applying for tenure-track faculty positions, and it gives the hosting institution, and its students, exposure to new research and teaching interests.

"Creating opportunities for recent graduates to come to Carolina to further their training is an important goal for not only our Center, but for Jewish Studies academic programming worldwide," said Ruth von Bernuth, director. "As our Center continues to grow and take a leadership role in Jewish studies, it's important for us to create these training programs."

Post-doc fellowships are not new to Carolina, but they currently are not offered specifically in the field of Jewish studies. The Center seeks a permanent endowment or long-term expendable fund to support a post-doc program. Please contact us for additional information at jewishstudies@unc.edu.

The Center's affiliated graduate students have been very successful in gaining coveted positions after they complete their Ph.D. programs. Many go on to hold tenure-track faculty positions at peer institutions, while others leave Carolina for post-doc fellowships, lectureships and adjunct teaching positions. Some graduating students instead looked outside of the university environment and have landed positions at museums, non-profits and secondary education. Last year, the Center teamed up with Jewish studies centers across the country—and internationally—to help students with career planning and networking.

In March, the Center's Graduate Student Network hosted Noam Pianko, past president of the Association for Jewish Studies and the Samuel N. Stroum Chair of Jewish Studies at the University of Washington, to talk about the future of Jewish studies as an academic discipline and



Noam Pianko talks with Center graduate students about how to make Jewish studies a career goal.

as a career goal. At the meeting, students asked questions on how to diversify their portfolio, how to prepare syllabi for teaching applications, and where to find non-faculty opportunities on, and off, university campuses.

A few weeks later, in April, the Center hosted several center directors who met with our graduate students to talk about the various career paths available. This networking opportunity allowed students to ask very specific questions about their interests and preparation for the job market. Special thank you to the Center directors for joining our graduate students: Moderator: Laura Lieber, Duke University. Participants: Steve Weitzman, University of Pennsylvania; Jonathan Boyarin, Cornell University; Eva Mroczek, UC Davis; Anna Shternshis, University of Toronto.

This upcoming year, the Center will continue to work with the Graduate Student Network members to ensure they feel prepared for life after Carolina and their graduate programs.



COLLEGE OF
ARTS AND SCIENCES

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THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

NEWS BRIEFS

Michael Figueroa was awarded tenure and promoted to associate professor, effective July 2021. Figueroa is based in the department of music, and served as the Center's associate director for three years. His recent research focused on music in the Israeli-Palestinian crisis, culminating in his first book, *City of Song: Music and the Making of Modern Jerusalem* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2021). He is also co-editor, with Annegret Fauser, of *Performing Commemoration: Musical Reenactment and the Politics of Trauma* (University of Michigan Press, 2020).

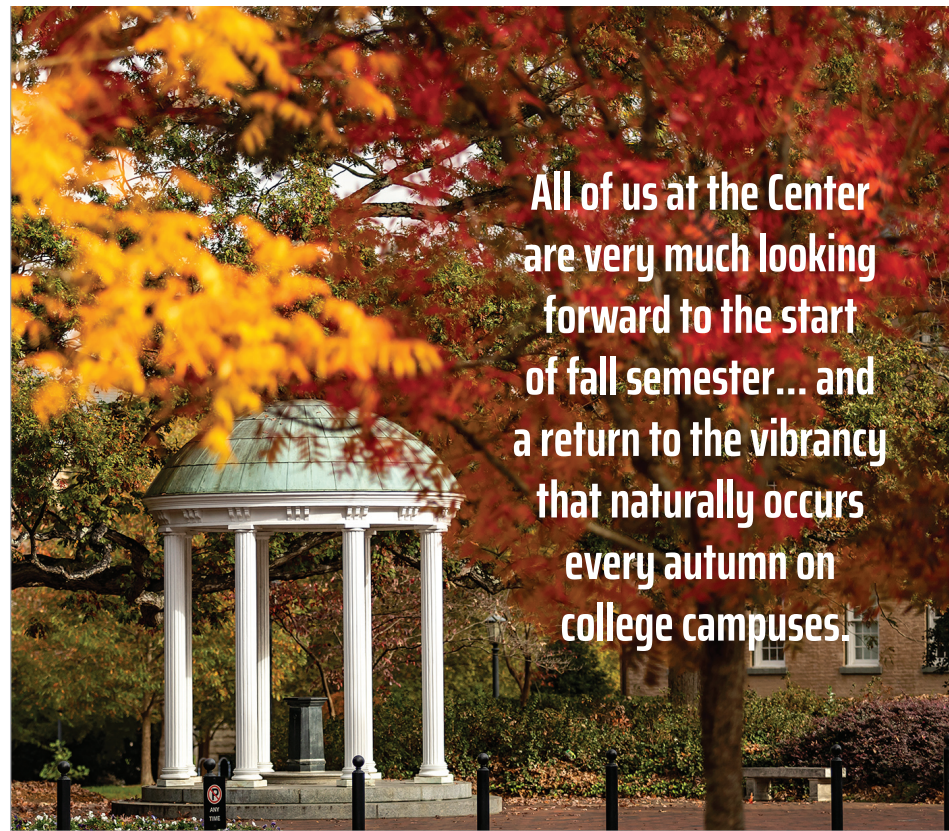
Samuel Zahn '22, has been selected as a 2021 Truman Scholar. Zahn is a Robertson Scholar pursuing a history and political science double major. He serves as president of the UNC Chabad Student Group, and in 2019, Zahn helped create "Confronting Antisemitism," a course dedicated to studying and discussing antisemitism.

The course was offered in spring 2020 and spring 2021 and is planned for spring 2022.

Oskar Czendze, department of history, gave a public talk in April, entitled "A Shtetl In New York? Jews from Eastern Europe and the American Immigrant Experience" organized by Carolina Public Humanities and co-sponsored by Wake Technical Community College and the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies. In Spring 2021, he was awarded the Peter Filene Creative Teaching Award from the department of history.

This semester, the Center welcomes two new graduate students to Carolina, recruited with the help of Top Up grants from the Center: **Ariadne Tsoulouhas** in the department of religious studies and **Emily McDonnell** in the department of American studies. All recruitment grants offered by the Center are made possible through generous private support.

Miguel Vargas, graduate student in the department of religious studies, was awarded the Center's Dissertation Fellowship for 2021-2022. Miguel's dissertation examines the history, historical consciousness and culture of a little-known Jewish community in Egypt by means of its prophetic literature. The fellowship was made possible by generous private support.



All of us at the Center are very much looking forward to the start of fall semester... and a return to the vibrancy that naturally occurs every autumn on college campuses.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Our Return to Campus

Ruth von Bernuth, Director

Seymour and Carol Levin Distinguished Professor
Professor, Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures
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All of us at the Center are very much looking forward to the start of fall semester, with in-person classes and lectures and a return to the vibrancy that naturally occurs every autumn on college campuses. And of course, we are excited for all the tiny additional things which don't show up in a syllabus or in a course plan, but nevertheless belong to a day at a university: the encounters between students and teachers in passing before or after a class, the chance meetings while waiting in line for coffee, and of course some idle chatter, which rarely is shared in online meetings but helps us all form friendships and collaborations.

Carolina's students have shown a remarkable commitment to their studies during remote instruction, but we cannot overlook that we will have an adjustment phase and need to fully support them during this semester's transition. As such, we will create numerous programs for both undergraduate and graduate students to rebuild connections

and help them take advantage of everything Carolina has to offer.

We are offering a mix of in-person and online community lectures this upcoming academic year. The best way to stay informed of our programming is to visit our web site (jewishstudies.unc.edu) or social media sites (@uncjewishstudies). I hope you will join us on campus or online and participate in these discussions.

There are many other plans in the works, some stemming from our formal review which we held in April, some in response to current events around the world, the nation and our campus. We are also starting to plan for a Yiddish workshop this spring as well as next year's 20th anniversary celebrations.

Your support of the Center makes everything we do possible. If you haven't already renewed your commitment to the Center this year, please consider doing so this fall. We have included a gift envelope but you can also make a gift online at jewishstudies.unc.edu.

For those of you in the triangle area, I am looking forward to seeing you, and chatting with you, on campus or around town this fall.

Formal Review of the Center

Last April, the College held its formal five-year review of the Center, a process that assesses what was accomplished during this time period and sets goals for the next five years. The review committee met online with administrators, faculty, staff and students before writing a report of findings and recommendations. Key points from this review process are:

Events programming: In addition to its annual community lectures, the Center organized several international and interdisciplinary academic conference and special events. Three conferences have produced academic publications. This was a major leap forward in the Center's development and positioning as a leading center in Jewish studies.

Graduate Students: The Center supports students working in a subfield of Jewish studies, aided in part by the Center's various recruitment grants/fellowships and research and travel grants. Each year, programming for graduate students steadily increased and included guest speakers to the Graduate Student Network.

During the past five years, several grad students earned the certificate in Jewish studies.

Undergraduate Students: academic programming for undergraduates included the religious studies/Jewish studies major, and the minors in Jewish studies and modern Hebrew. There are more than 110 Jewish studies courses on the books at Carolina. A new course titled "Confronting Antisemitism" was introduced, and the Capstone Course in Jewish studies was offered each year with a different topic and faculty leader. A new undergraduate student advisory committee was created last year to help identify programs and support needed for undergrads.

Much of the committee's report focused on administration of the Center, including staffing levels, office space, reporting structure, faculty participation and budget/fund raising priorities, with a particular emphasis on the Center's long-term needs. All action items from the review are under discussion and planning is underway.

NEWS BRIEFS

Patricia Rosenmeyer, the George L. Paddison Professor of Classics in the department of classics, co-organized a three-day international workshop on "Modern Jewish Receptions of Classical Antiquity," held online in May. The 14 presentations, including participants from the UK, US, and Israel, covered a wide range of texts within the 20th century, and explored how authors writing in Hebrew, Arabic and Yiddish were inspired by classical sources, whether through allusion, imitation or translation.

MODERN JEWISH RECEPTIONS OF CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY
May 18 – 20, 2021 at the University of Haifa
Online Workshop – Tuesday 18 May 2021
(17:30 Israel; 15:30 GMT; 09:30 San Francisco; 16:30 Sardinia)
Organizers: Vered Lev Kananan and Patricia Rosenmeyer

17:30 – 18:00 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION
18:00 – 19:30 SESSION I
Chair: Patricia Rosenmeyer
Simon Goldhill, Cambridge University
What is a Jewish Classical?
Margalit Finkelberg, Tel Aviv University
Classical Studies in Israel: A Mirror of Changing Identity
Break

19:45 – 21:15 SESSION II
Chair: Simon Goldhill
Patricia Rosenmeyer, The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
After Lights Out: Studying the Classics in a WWI Internment Camp
Yotam Cohen, Bar-Ilan University
"Now I can Buy The Myths of Greece and Rome, Spelled": The Classical World and the Construction of Jews in the Modern World

Gabrielle Berlinger's students in JWST/FOLK 380: Jewish Folklore and Ethnography collaborated with Elsewhere (a living museum and artist residency set inside a former thrift store in Greensboro) to research Southern Jewish histories and traditions as they relate to that building, its owners (the Gray family), and Greensboro more broadly. The students produced final media projects and participated in Elsewhere's Radical Seder event. The class research will contribute to the development of a new tour at the museum about Southern Jewish history and culture through the lens of the Gray family.

"Radically at Home": 10th Annual Radical Seder

RADICALLY AT HOME:
ELSEWHERE'S 10TH ANNUAL RADICAL SEDER



UPCOMING EVENTS

We are pleased to announce that we are planning for an **assortment of in-person and remote lectures** for the 2021–2022 academic year. Upcoming event topics will range from Yiddish studies to Biblical studies and Holocaust studies.

We have several current grad students and recent graduates slated to continue our **Emerging Scholars lectures** which will introduce attendees to new areas of research in the Jewish studies field.

We also hope to offer a spring-semester **Yiddish workshop**, which will combine in-person and online talks and discussions.

The fall semester event schedule will be posted on our web site and social media sites in late August. **To receive email updates, please join our list serv** (details on back cover and on our web site: jewishstudies.unc.edu.)

We hope you will join us on campus or online for our upcoming events.