

JWST 206. INTRODUCTION TO YIDDISH LITERATURE.

Credits: 3

Offered by: Jewish Studies (Faculty of Arts)

Terms offered: Winter 2026

View offerings for Winter 2026 in Visual Schedule Builder.

Description

A survey of Yiddish literature with a particular focus on the modern period (the 1860s to the present). As we read major works of Yiddish literature, we will discuss the main factors in its development, including its position as a minority literature, Ashkenazi civilization's religious foundations and multilingualism, the rise of political movements, and the trauma of the Holocaust. In his Nobel lecture, Yiddish writer Isaac Bashevis Singer described Yiddish as "the idiom of the frightened and hopeful humanity." We will explore both the reasons behind and the effects of such universalization of Yiddish language, literature, and culture.

- For detailed course content go to www.mcgill.ca/jewishstudies/undergraduates.
- Readings are in English

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