

THE CENTRE'S
FIRST YEAR

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY | CENTRE FOR JEWISH STUDIES

From the Director

Happy first birthday to the Centre for Jewish Studies! Since we launched in Fall 2025, we've welcomed one of the last known Jewish witnesses to Kristallnacht, collaborated with NSCAD to host a Scholar/Artist-in-Residence who taught us Hebrew calligraphy and historical Jewish printing, and learned from scholars, local and international, who invited us into a dizzying array of global Jewish cultures – from Judeo-Arabic philosophical manuscripts to Jewish music in India to Soviet immigration. (If you haven't read about those events in our last newsletter, you can find it on our website, **dal.ca/jewish-studies**.) And the first class of Dalhousie students has graduated with the new Certificate in Jewish Studies. Congratulations!

We're cooking up much more in 2026-2027. Literally *cooking* – in October, students and community members will get to cook alongside James Beard Award-winning culinary historian Michael Twitty, an expert on the foodways of African and Jewish diasporas, using recipes from his book *KosherSoul*. His evening Irving Glovin Lecture will engage us in a discussion about food and racial justice. A major workshop on Indigenous-Jewish dialogue follows, featuring the first concert in history to bring together musicians performing in Mi'kmaw and in Yiddish (including Juno Award-winning fiddler Morgan Toney), an art exhibit co-curated by Mi'kmaw artist Jessica Jerome and the Polish-Jewish *Zapomniane* Foundation, and talks by world class guest experts in Jewish and Indigenous Studies. A new course, "Muslims and Jews: Cultures and Coexistence," which I am co-teaching with SMU's Dr. Syed Adnan Hussain, offers a deep dive into another intertwined history.

We've also built new partnerships that allow us to offer unprecedented opportunities to Dalhousie students, scholars, and the local community. With KlezKanada, Canada's primary cultural organization for Jewish arts, we are able to send students free of charge to the Summer Retreat, a globally recognized program for creatives. A new partnership with the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies brings us two student internships and a major oral history project: four students will be trained to document and share the stories of Atlantic Jewish families. And in May 2027, Dalhousie will host the ACJS's annual conference, bringing their academic and public programming to the Maritimes for the first time in many years.

Our academic offerings are growing too. Despite continuing budget shortfalls that are gutting language programs across the country, Hebrew is going strong in the Department of Classics alongside Greek and Latin. Enrollment in Introductory Hebrew has tripled, and we have committed to offering Intermediate Biblical Hebrew every year. Enrollment in the introductory Judaism class has increased by 165% since 2024. Read on to learn about new courses developed by our world class faculty.

On a personal note: I just celebrated two years at Dalhousie and two years back home in Canada, after having worked in the United States for the previous thirteen. This new chapter has given me and my family many gifts. One of the most meaningful has been the support and enthusiasm—from university faculty and leadership, the community, and especially students of all backgrounds—for what we are building in Jewish Studies here at Dal. We are launching an Atlantic-wide scholarly network.

We are creating cultural experiences that highlight collaboration and diversity. Students of all backgrounds are pursuing the Certificate in Jewish Studies, discovering internships and research, and engaging meaningfully with Jewish cultures: diverse, vibrant, always connected with others.

I'm grateful to our Program Coordinator, Katie Blatt, our Outreach Coordinator, Doak, and our new Associate Director, Dr. Dorota Głowacka, for their work to make all this possible. Please enjoy reading about what we're up to. We can't wait to see you at one of our events!

אַל דאָס גוטס,
כל טוב,

Eva



EVA MROCZEK
Simon and Riva Spatz Chair in Jewish Studies

Professor, Classics and Religion

Director, Centre for Jewish Studies

A Note from our Associate Director

In its first year, the Centre for Jewish Studies was teeming with exciting events and opportunities to learn about the many facets of Jewish culture and traditions. While I am usually in my office right next door, at the University of King's College, I am excited to be joining the Centre and create more opportunities for our universities to work, play, and create together. I bring my interests and expertise in gender theory, language learning, contemporary critical thought, Holocaust and genocide studies, and social justice to help understand how they have defined the contours of Jewish life, culture, and history in the past as well as today.

I came to Canada from Poland, the country that, before World War II, was home to more than three million Jewish people with their rich cultures, languages, and traditions of learning, including my own ancestors and family. My life and work have been shaped by my experiences as a newcomer and a guest in Mi'kmaki, the ancestral land of the L'nu. I am committed to the vision of the Centre for Jewish Studies that is always looking outwards, where we understand Jewish traditions and history as multilingual and diverse, steeped in conversations with other cultural practices, bodies of knowledge, and ways of being in the world.

Dorota Głowacka



DOROTA GŁOWACKA
Professor of Humanities, Contemporary Studies Program, University of King's College

Associate Director, Centre for Jewish Studies, Dalhousie University



SIMON AND RIVA SPATZ

The Centre for Jewish Studies at Dalhousie University owes its origins to the establishment of the Simon and Riva Spatz Chair in Jewish Studies, a faculty position currently held by its founding Director, Eva Mroczek. Simon and Riva Spatz met in Germany after the Second World War. Simon had escaped a labour camp the day before the Nazis murdered all its prisoners, and Riva survived with the resistance in the woods of Poland. In the face of great loss, they built new lives and a thriving family in Halifax, helping build our diverse and vibrant city. The Centre is proud to honour their legacy.

Jewish Studies in Action: Tales from the Certificate

The Certificate in Jewish Studies, launched in Fall 2025, is the first academic credential in Jewish Studies in Atlantic Canada. Open to Dal and King's students in any program, it draws students of all backgrounds into an encounter with Jewish culture and history. Students can choose from twenty-nine courses (and counting) across several departments, including Classics, Religious Studies, History, and Contemporary Studies.

See what our Certificate students have to say!

"As an English and Creative Writing major, I find the certificate complements my studies exceptionally well: many of the texts and traditions examined in Jewish Studies have profoundly influenced Western literature, storytelling, and intellectual history. Studying biblical texts, ancient languages, and Jewish literary traditions has deepened my appreciation for narrative structures, symbolism, and the cultural contexts that shape literary works. The program's relatively small class sizes create an intimate learning environment where students can engage directly with professors, whose passion for the subject matter and willingness to share their specialized knowledge make the courses especially engaging and rewarding. This close interaction has allowed me to explore complex topics in greater depth and has made the Certificate feel a part of a truly collaborative, intellectual community."

— Finn Anderson (Third year, Double Major in English & Creative Writing)

"What got me really interested in the Certificate was the fact that it was incredibly easy to get with my Classics major. Many of the classes I had been taking already counted toward the Certificate, partially because they are often at least cross-listed with Classics, but also because a basis in Jewish studies is very relevant to my interest in Medieval Christianity. The professors are truly some of the most wonderful people I've gotten to learn from, and the most memorable class I have taken is definitely "Biblical Hebrew" (though "Dead Sea Scrolls" is a close second!). Dr. Grundke is a genuinely phenomenal language professor and will give you a foundation that you honestly would not expect to get out of even just one semester. You will feel so proud of yourself for finishing each assignment and by the end of it, even if you, like me, only do one semester, not one part of you will regret having faced the labour of 'Biblical Hebrew' head on."

— Sydney Hohlweg (Fourth year, Major in Classics)

"I grew up in Vancouver moderately involved in my Jewish community there through community building and teaching younger kids, but didn't end up doing a lot of Jewish learning. My experiences in the King's Foundation Year Program sparked my interest in Jewish Studies, especially the lectures on Medieval Judaism and the Bible, as well as all the lectures offered by the Centre for Jewish Studies. I think the Certificate will contribute to my education by giving me a sense of my cultural history as well as fulfilling my longtime wish of learning all that I can about Judaism."

— Mia Collett (Second year, Combined Honours in Early Modern Studies and History)

Mazel Tov to our Alumni!

The first group of students graduated with a Certificate in Jewish Studies this past Spring! **See what two of our alumni have to say:**

"A few years back, I was talking with a friend about my degree and sort of downplaying my chosen disciplines ('oh yeah, just a nonsense liberal arts degree') to which they replied earnestly that it was not ridiculous: "everything is religious, everything is contemporary", I remember them saying. It clearly stuck with me. In my view, Jewish Studies is a beautiful and profound intersection of the religious and the contemporary. The courses at Dalhousie and King's for this Certificate travel through ancient to contemporary ideas around religion, language, law, philosophy, history, psychology, literature, politics, memory (to name a few). Even in classes more explicitly one than the other, I've learned how they are in a dialogue with one another as the texts and ideas travel through time, space, and probably outside of them too."

— Earl Gertler (Class of 2026, Combined Honours in Religious Studies and Contemporary Studies)

"While the Certificate does not much directly intersect with my majors, the pursuit of polymathy and cross-disciplinary learning is a priority of mine. The general skills of literary criticism, critical thought, cultural sensitivity, etc. that come from courses like those under the Certificate offer a useful supplement to the competencies cultivated by the typical STEM student. Dr. Mroczek's "Gender and Sexuality in the Bible" remains one of my favourite courses I've taken to date, which included a unique assignment designed to transpose the student into the frame and intimately engage with a Biblical passage or other narrative through rewriting a text themselves. This was rather memorable, as I've not experienced an assignment that quite demanded that manner of engagement before or since."

— Hsiang-Che "Sean" Yu (Class of 2026, Combined Honours in Microbiology & Immunology and Biochemistry & Molecular Biology with a minor in Religious Studies)



Photo: Doak

DR. SOLOMON NAGLER (NSCAD) SHARED AN ORIGINAL FILM INSPIRED BY THE POETRY OF RABBI NEHEMIAH BEN ABRAHAM MOTA, A 17TH CENTURY KABBALISTIC MYSTIC FROM KERALA, INDIA, WHO IS VENERATED BY LOCAL MUSLIM AND HINDU COMMUNITIES.

Looking Back on Winter 2026

Lunchtime Lehrhaus

This Winter, we continued to spotlight local scholars of Jewish Studies through our Lunchtime Seminar Series. With *nosh* in hand from beloved Halifax Jewish restaurant, Hali Deli, to fuel us, our academic guest speakers delivered intellectual nourishment as they shared unique insights from their research.



Photo: Arran Shore McNab



Photo: Arran Shore McNab

DR. DANIEL BRANDES (KING'S) HELPED UNCOVER AN IMPLICIT MESSIANIC FRAME WHICH EMERGES THROUGHOUT PHILOSOPHER HANNAH ARENDT'S BODY OF WORK.



OVER TEA AND TREATS FROM TART & SOUL CAFE, DR. ALEXANDER TREIGER (DALHOUSIE) SHARED HIS EVOLVING RESEARCH ON A MEDIEVAL MUSLIM PHILOSOPHICAL TEXT, THE LONGER THEOLOGY OF ARISTOTLE, THAT HAS SURPRISINGLY SURVIVED ONLY IN A JUDEO-ARABIC MANUSCRIPT AND ITS LATIN TRANSLATION.



DR. MICHELE BYERS (SMU) INTRODUCED HER NEW PROJECT ON WHAT MAKES CANADIAN JEWISH TELEVISION DISTINCTLY CANADIAN, AND WHAT IT TELLS US ABOUT CANADIAN JEWISH LIFE.

Hebrew Reading Group Wins Classics Prize at Pythian Games

This past winter, Centre Director Dr. Eva Mroczek held a biblical Hebrew Reading Group in conjunction with her 3000-level Dead Sea Scrolls class. It was open to everyone, and participants from Dal, SMU, and the Atlantic School of Theology met every other week to read texts together. Some participants had just taught themselves the aleph-bet, some had a semester of Hebrew behind them, and some had been studying (or even teaching) Hebrew for years. We all learned new things, decoded Dead Sea Scrolls manuscripts, and enjoyed the beauty and power of the language that traditional Jewish texts present as the very material of creation.

This semester also marked the return of Hebrew to the Pythian Games, a festival of performance in ancient languages put on each year by students in the Department of Classics. Hebrew Reading Group members learned to recite Psalm 82 in the original Hebrew, and performed it off book and in costume at the Games. The Psalm's stirring account of justice and conflict in the divine council was expressed with high drama, humour, and impeccably pronounced Hebrew *chets*. The performance earned the Hebrew Reading Group the Alumni Prize and celebrated the place of Hebrew as a classical language alongside Greek and Latin. Hebrew can now take the place of Greek or Latin as a language requirement for the Classics major, and the Department has committed to offering both Introductory and Intermediate Hebrew every year. And everyone's welcome to join our Monday Hebrew Club this Fall semester (read on)!



Photos: Cody Turner



CLASSICS FACULTY PLAY THE DIVINE COUNCIL, DETHRONED BY THE UPSTART DEITY OF PSALM 82.

Nu! Adventures with Summer Yiddish

This past summer, the Centre offered a non-credit community beginner Yiddish course. Our teacher was the wonderful Dr. Brett Winestock, scholar of Soviet Jewry and Yiddish instructor at the University of Ottawa. Students from all generations met twice a week for twelve weeks to study the ancestral language that many Ashkenazi Jews call the *mameloshn*, "mother tongue."

We'll all remember that Yiddish for "how are you?" is "vos macht a yid?" - literally "what's a Jew doing?" and that when you've forgotten your vocabulary homework, "nu" is an appropriate answer to almost any question. And we'll never forget the concept of the "gefilte fish line": a useful tool to help determine which dialect of Yiddish certain communities spoke, according to whether they made their gefilte fish sweet or savory!

> After only a few classes, I was able to pick up lyrics from songs, and lines from poems. The Yiddish course at the Centre for Jewish Studies has made me feel more connected to my heritage and more comfortable with my *mame-loshn*. Additionally: my grandma thinks it's super cool that I'm taking it!"
>
> — Sophie Kinch-Lake

> Taking Yiddish this summer has been an absolute pleasure! After many failed attempts to learn my *mame-loshn* with Duolingo, I'm so glad that Brett offered this class. The experience has helped me connect with my *yiddishe nefesh* and appreciate new ways of being Jewish."
>
> — Aaron Kraft



DR. BRETT WINESTOCK WITH YIDDISH STUDENTS AND THE SONG *SHOYN AVEK DER NEKHTN*, "YESTERDAY IS GONE."

Rosenberg Family donates Samuel Bak painting to University of King's College Library

A painting by the celebrated artist and Holocaust survivor Samuel Bak will grace the walls of the University of King's College Library Reading Room as of this November. The painting belonged to the late Dr. Edwin Rosenberg, and was donated to King's by his wife, Dr. Victoria Rosenberg.

Dr. Edwin Rosenberg (1940-2025) was born in Brooklyn and moved to Halifax to study psychiatry, graduating with an M.D. from Dalhousie University in 1965. His long and distinguished medical career had a profound impact on generations of doctors and patients alike. The Centre for Jewish Studies is grateful to the Rosenberg family for the opportunity both to celebrate Samuel Bak, one of the world's most renowned Jewish painters, and to honour the memory of Dr. Edwin Rosenberg, who contributed so much to our city.



SAMUEL BAK PHOTOGRAPHED FOR PAKN TREGER, 2018. CC-BY-SA-4.0. WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

New Partnerships

New relationships with cultural and academic organizations across Canada are putting the Centre on the map and bringing unprecedented opportunities to our students.

KlezKanada

The Centre has partnered with KlezKanada, one of the leading Yiddish cultural organizations in the world. Each year, **two free spots will be available to Dalhousie or King's students to attend KlezKanada's annual Summer Retreat**, a major Yiddish cultural event where participants celebrate and study the living traditions of Yiddish arts and culture in a diverse and welcoming community.

This summer, Jewish Studies Certificate student Finn Anderson attended KlezKanada's Summer Retreat in the Laurentian mountains of Quebec. Finn, a Creative Writing major, has deep roots in Yiddish-speaking culture and has been working to reconnect with the music, folklore, and languages of his ancestors. In our next newsletter, Finn – a talented storyteller – will share how his KlezKanada experience enriched his education, creative practice, and personal quest for his roots.

Association for Canadian Jewish Studies

A new partnership between the Centre for Jewish Studies and the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies (ACJS) will bring a wealth of new work opportunities to Dalhousie students – and shine a light on East Coast Jewish life. "Dalhousie is delighted to partner with the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies to advance learning, research, and public engagement around Jewish life in Canada and Atlantic Canada's place within that story," says Dalhousie President Kim Brooks. "This collaboration will create meaningful opportunities for students and scholars while helping deepen our collective understanding of the histories, communities, and experiences that shape our region and country."

Dalhousie Students to Collect Atlantic Jewish Oral Histories

Dalhousie will become a hub of the Canadian Jewish Oral History Collaboratory, an ACJS project funded in part by the Canadian Race Relations Foundation (CRRF). A team of **four Dalhousie and King's students** will be trained in oral history methods in Fall 2026 and hired to collect, preserve, and share the memories of Atlantic Jewish Canada.

"Launching one of the Oral History Collaboratory's founding projects in the Maritimes reflects the Association's commitment to cultivating new knowledge about Canadian Jewish life on a truly national scale," says Joshua Tapper ('09), Executive Director of the ACJS. "Jewish life in Atlantic Canada dates back to the mid-eighteenth century, and by documenting the experiences of today's community, we'll create a lasting resource for anyone seeking to understand how Jewish life in Atlantic Canada has evolved."

The students' research will not only count toward academic credit for Winter 2027, but also culminate in a digital archive and public programming with the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 - the first large-scale academic project documenting Atlantic Jewish life. Meet our team of student interviewers in the next newsletter!

Publishing Internships in Academic and Literary Journals

Two paid internships will be available for Dalhousie and King's students: a publishing intern will assist with publishing the ACJS' academic journal, *Canadian Jewish Studies*, and the newly re-launched journal for Canadian Jewish fiction and poetry, *Parchment*. Another student will work in a programmatic and administrative capacity on one of the ACJS's many initiatives devoted to raising public awareness of the Canadian Jewish experience.

"Opportunities for hands-on work, such as these new internships, uniquely enrich the learning that takes place in lecture halls and libraries," says Sociology major Katie Blatt, the Centre for Jewish Studies' first Program Coordinator. "My time at the Centre for Jewish Studies has been so personally fulfilling, as I've had the chance to work alongside professors whom I admire, develop important (and employable!) skills for my future, and support projects that I feel are profoundly meaningful. I'm very glad there will be more of these valuable opportunities which uplift students and foster our success beyond graduation!"

Dalhousie to Host 2027 Canadian Jewish Studies Conference

In early June, 2027, Dalhousie will host the ACJS Annual Conference. Some 60 scholars will meet in Halifax for three days of academic panels and public events, bringing the best in Canadian Jewish Studies to our local community. "It's been at least twenty-five years since the ACJS staged its annual conference in the Maritimes," says Tapper, "and we're beyond excited to return to the region with Dalhousie's partnership. In addition to featuring top-notch research from up-and-coming and established scholars in the field, our conference also serves as a vehicle for public engagement with Canadian Jewish studies. We very much look forward to hosting the wider community for three days of learning, conversation, and discovery." The conference will situate Halifax as a major hub of Jewish life and learning in Canada.

The Year To Come! 2026-2027

After an exciting first year, we look forward to a packed 2026-2027. Join us!

Jewish Studies Courses

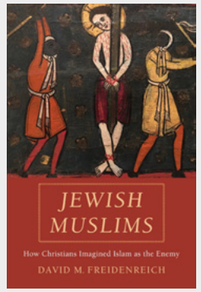
29 different courses in Jewish Studies are offered at Dalhousie University – and the list keeps growing!

This year's course offerings:

- **CLAS 1500/RELS 1500** Death and the Afterlife
- **RELS 2001** Judaism
- **CLAS 2220/RELS 2220/HIST 2520** Ancient Israel and Judah
- **CLAS 2920** Introductory Biblical Hebrew
- **CLAS 2921** Introductory Biblical Hebrew II
- **CLAS 3920** Intermediate Hebrew I
- **CLAS 3921** Intermediate Hebrew II
- **CLAS / RELS 3080** Ritual, Myth, and Music
- **CTMP 3316/EMSP 3216** Spinozisms
- **HIST 3056** The Holocaust
- **RELS 3022** Muslims and Jews
- **RELS 3310** The Bible and Its Interpreters

COURSE SPOTLIGHT

Muslims and Jews: Cultures and Coexistence





DR. DAVID FREIDENREICH

Co-taught by Dr. Syed Adnan Hussain (St. Mary's University) and Dr. Eva Mroczek (Dalhousie), this course explores the interconnected past and present of Jews and Muslims. Through themes like scripture, authority, ritual, and food, we will explore how Jewish and Muslim cultures have been intertwined with one another from ancient through modern times. We will encounter the deep past of this relationship, appreciate each tradition's internal diversity and vibrant creativity, and consider how both Jews and Muslims have navigated majority-Christian societies over time.

Held on Thursday evenings, each class session will be team-taught by both instructors in a spirit of friendship and generous curiosity. Guest speakers will enrich the class. On October 15, **Dr. David Freidenreich**, author of *Jewish Muslims: How Christians Imagined Islam as the Enemy*, joins the class from Colby College in Maine to share his research on the intertwined history of antisemitism and Islamophobia in the Christian Middle Ages and beyond.

Meeting with Jewish-Muslim Student Group "Bridging the Gap"

Thursday, November 5, 5:30 pm
Rowe Management Building, 6100 University Ave
Presented in collaboration with **Dr. Jamie Levin**, Tanenbaum Chair in Peace and Conflict in the Department of Political Science at St. Francis Xavier University.

The "Muslims and Jews" class welcomes "**Bridging the Gap**," a group of Muslim/Arab/Palestinian and Jewish/Israeli students who have established a dialogue group at York University and the University of Toronto. With their faculty advisor, Canadian Jewish Studies scholar **Dr. Randal Schnoor** (York University), the students are visiting university campuses across Canada to share the values of respectful dialogue and human dignity. The class session with the students in "Bridging the Gap" will be open to the public.

New Courses to Launch in 2027-2028

Athens and Jerusalem

Eli Diamond (Classics) and Daniel Brandes (Contemporary Studies)

Dr. Eli Diamond, Chair of Classics and scholar of Ancient Greek philosophy, and Dr. Daniel Brandes, an expert in modern Jewish philosophy at the University of King's College, team up to present a new course, "Athens and Jerusalem." These two cities are a pair that stands in for Greek and Jewish thought, two of the primary threads in Western thought and religion from antiquity to modern times.

"Athens and Jerusalem are often used as shorthand for 'reason' and 'revelation,' but the truth is far more interesting," says Diamond. "In the class, we'll look at fundamental issues of philosophy and religion – divine nature, human nature, creation, revelation, law, sacrifice, suffering, humour, language, interpretation – and compare Greek and Jewish approaches to these questions." Brandes and Diamond's class reveals that Greek and Jewish thought were intertwined: Jewish thinkers both tried to incorporate Greek ideas and criticized the legacy of Greek thought from the distinctive standpoint of the Jewish intellectual tradition.



ZODIAC WHEEL MOSAIC (WITH HELIOS FIGURE IN THE CENTRE) FROM THE 6TH CENTURY BETH ALPHA SYNAGOGUE. PUBLIC DOMAIN.

"These encounters between Jewish and Greek threads continue throughout the history of philosophy," says Brandes, who teaches classes like "Giants of Modern Jewish Thought" and lectured on Hannah Arendt in our lunch seminar series last Winter. "The class will consider key moments in this relationship in the work of thinkers like Philo, Maimonides, Spinoza, Hermann Cohen, Franz Rosenzweig, Leo Strauss, and Emmanuel Levinas."

Kabbalah

Seth Sanders (Classics)

Kabbalah, the tradition of Jewish mysticism that flourished in the Middle Ages, has profoundly shaped Jewish practice – as well as modern esoteric and occult traditions. But Kabbalah has much older roots, says the new course's creator, Dr. Seth Sanders: "Where did Jewish mysticism originally come from? Originally, when I began learning the languages, rituals, and mythology that came *before* Judaism, I wondered if I could discover the roots of Jewish mysticism, the idea of journeying to heaven to meet God. I want to go back and share it with people and see if maybe I was right."

Sanders, who also teaches courses like Death and the Afterlife, the Bible and Its Interpreters, and Ritual, Myth, and Music, notes that Kabbalah is exciting because it is a paradox at the heart of Judaism. "On the one hand, it looks like a wildly mythological form of thought where mystics do not hesitate to describe the exact dimensions of God's body, and claim to be able to tell us the exact words that are sung before God's throne. On the other hand, in its subtle and complex approach to the nature of language, perception, and being itself. It often ended up functioning as the more or less official theology and philosophy of Judaism. Who knew Judaism was this weird?"



TITLE PAGE OF FIRST EDITION OF THE ZOHAR, MANTUA, 1558. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS. PUBLIC DOMAIN.

He's excited to share some of the wildest and most beautiful poetry ever found in Hebrew or Aramaic. Students will read the texts in translation, but those who want to study them in the original languages will have the opportunity to do so. "This class is for anyone who is curious about what it is like to meet God," says Sanders. "Note that we will not actually meet God, just learn about what it is supposed to be like..."

Jewish Law

Eva Mroczek (Religious Studies)

Why was "Impossible Pork" not certified kosher, even though it contains no animal products? Why are traditional Jewish and Christian approaches to abortion so different? How have ancient patriarchal texts been used to argue for the equality and authority of women and LGBTQ people? How does human life and dignity supersede even the most important requirement of Jewish religious life? "This class uses the Jewish tradition as a way to consider key issues in legal thought in general," says instructor Eva Mroczek. "We consider how law develops over time, how decision-makers approach competing values, what law means outside the context of state enforcement, and what happens when new groups of interpreters claim authority over its meaning. Law, Justice, and Society is one of Dalhousie's most popular majors, and the Jewish tradition can offer students fresh insight into the entire field." The course begins with the Torah and the foundational corpus of Rabbinic Judaism, the Mishnah and Talmud, and traces how medieval and modern Jewish interpreters use them to respond to the concerns of their own time. "We look at case studies from across two millennia," Mroczek says. "They show us that the old antisemitic canard that Judaism is 'legalistic' — rigid, strict, and technical — misses the flexibility and creative adaptation at the heart of the Jewish legal tradition."

Fall 2026 Academic Events

Build and Learn in the CJS Teaching Sukkah

Friday evening, Sept. 25 through Thursday evening, Oct. 1
Department of Classics patio
1172 Marion McCain Arts and Social Sciences Building
6135 University Avenue, Halifax

The Festival of Sukkot commemorates the ancient Israelites' wandering in the desert after the Exodus from Egypt. Observant families build a sukkah, a temporary outdoor dwelling that allows in both starlight and rain, and eat their meals there throughout the week. With minimal protection from the elements, the sukkah serves as a reminder of human vulnerability and the fragility of life. It's also a holiday of hospitality: guests are invited into the sukkah for a shared meal. Traditionally, these guests also include the ancestors, whose presence is summoned into the sukkah.

Students will build and decorate a Teaching Sukkah and welcome people of all backgrounds for seven nights of community and learning. Jewish Studies faculty will join us in the sukkah for a series of informal teach-ins and discussions over a simple meal. Check **dal.ca/jewish-studies** for the full schedule!

"Yearning for Spirituality in Religious Naturalism": Sukkot learning with Rabbi Dr. David Oler

September 29th, 5:30 pm
Department of Classics Library
Room 1184, Marion McCain Arts and Social Sciences Building
6135 University Avenue, Halifax
Followed by dinner in our CJS Sukkah

Rabbi Dr. David Oler, a graduate of McGill University, holds a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology and a Doctor of Hebrew Letters from Hebrew Union College. He is a practicing psychotherapist, serves as the founding rabbi of the New Reform Congregation Kadimah in Illinois, and teaches Jewish Thought at the Hebrew Seminary of Chicago. Over his fifty years as an ordained rabbi, Dr. Oler has worked at the intersection of spirituality and mental health.

In his talk, Dr. Oler offers an account of the development of liberal theology within Judaism, and shows how people have used Judaism's resources for personal growth even while questioning traditional belief. Join us to discover how Humanistic Judaism and its liturgical creativity fit into the dizzyingly diverse Jewish world, and how they might be understood alongside the liberal streams and spiritual practices of other religious traditions.

Centre for Jewish Studies and Black and African Diaspora Studies Program Welcome Culinary Historian Michael W. Twitty



Michael W. Twitty is a celebrated culinary historian, educator, and writer. A two-time James Beard Award-winner, he is author of four books: *The Cooking Gene: A Journey Through African American Culinary History in the Old South (2017)*; *KosherSoul: The Faith and Food Journey of an African American Jew*; *Rice (2023)*; and *Recipes From the American South (2025)*. His work explores the intersection of food, racial justice, and Black and Jewish cultures.

Cooking Demonstration and Tasting

Jewish Studies and Black and African Diaspora Studies students will join chef Michael Twitty in the Howe Dining Hall kitchen to cook recipes from *KosherSoul: The Faith and Food Journey of an African American Jew*. See this charismatic chef and storyteller in action: the demonstration and tasting is open to the public!

Tuesday, October 6, 2026
2-3:30 pm
Howe Dining Hall
6230 Coburg Road, Halifax

2026 Irving Glovin Lecture: Our Plates Have No Boundaries



Join culinary historian and cultural activist Michael W. Twitty for a critique of the idea that "food brings people together," arguing instead that we have responsibility for the task of using the table to foment sustainable positive change and healing.

The Irving Glovin Lecture series, established by the Oskar Schindler Humanities Foundation, brings speakers to Dalhousie to share insights on themes of good human conduct, diversity, and inclusiveness.

Before and after the lecture, join us in the McCain lobby to sample African diaspora food prepared by participants in SPICE (Specialized Program in Cooking Entrepreneurship), which supports underrepresented Nova Scotian women in establishing food-related businesses.

Tuesday, October 6, 2026
Reception 6:30 pm; Lecture 7:30 pm
Scotiabank Auditorium
Marion McCain Arts and Social Sciences Building
Dalhousie University
6135 University Avenue

Dr. Avia Moore Look for the Makers: Exploring the Yiddish Cultural Renaissance



October 19th, 5:30 pm
Weldon Law Building 104
6061 University Ave

Who are the artists, scholars, and teachers working with Yiddish culture in 2026? Weaving together examples and anecdotes, performance studies scholar and Artistic Director of KlezKanada, Dr. Avia Moore, will illustrate the rich outpouring of contemporary Yiddish cultural creation happening around us. These makers, whose work often speaks to a complex and nuanced relationship with tradition, strong commitment to socially-engaged cultural practice, and a dedication to fostering social infrastructure and cultural ecosystems, prompt us to think critically about the ways that heritage is presented in Jewish community today.

Avia Moore is the Artistic Director of KlezKanada and has worked extensively as a creative producer across North America and Europe. An internationally-acclaimed leader of Yiddish dance, she presents Yiddish dance at festivals and events around the world, coaches emerging dance leaders, and works as a consultant for choreographers, directors, and teachers seeking to engage with Jewish movement. Avia's work as an interdisciplinary artist draws upon dance, theatre, music, fibre arts, and photography, among other forms, and is grounded in devised theatre techniques and collaboration. Avia holds a PhD in Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies from York University.

Fostering Indigenous-Jewish Dialogue in Mi'kma'ki: A Two-Eyed Seeing/Etuaptmumk Approach

This three day workshop is a collaboration with the University of King's College, Mount Saint Vincent University's "Two-Eyed Seeing Project," and NSCAD's Treaty Space Gallery. It takes place from October 25th to 27th and it aims to promote intercultural learning about Indigenous and Jewish histories and heritage transmission. A series of pedagogy sessions for university students, faculty, and staff will be co-instructed by scholars of Indigenous Studies and Jewish Studies. The workshops focus on three topics: the destruction and revitalization of languages, the role of material objects in the preservation of cultures and histories, and the repatriation and return of ancestral objects and cultural artefacts. The workshop also features cultural events and a Keynote Roundtable, which are all free and open to the public.

A Concert of Living Languages: Mi'kmaw and Yiddish Song

October 25th, 7:30 pm
Joseph Strug Concert Hall
(1385 Seymour St, Halifax NS)

An unprecedented collaboration brings creators of new Yiddish and Mi'kmaw music together on one stage.

Mi'kmaw songwriter and fiddler **Morgan Toney** and his ensemble, whose Juno Award-winning music brings together the fiery fiddling of Cape Breton with the songs of the Mi'kmaq in a fusion he calls Mi'kmaltic (Mi'kmaq + Celtic)

Montreal-based klezmer band **Yene Velt String Ensemble and Burial Society**, who present violin and tsimbl instrumentation drawing from a repertoire of 100-year old recordings, manuscripts collected by travelling folklorists, and original compositions

King's alumni **Rachel Kimmelman** and **Lucas Tennen**, who transform Yiddish dance into a distinctly modern art form that invites all people to connect with ancestral traditions

Award-winning Halifax violinist and educator **Gina Burgess**, shaped by the vitality of both Jewish and Indigenous musical traditions, whose musicianship embodies the possibilities of cross-cultural connection here in Halifax/Kjipuktuk

Join us for the show and a post-concert discussion between the performers, moderated by Gina Burgess.



JESSICA JEROME, *THE VISITING SPIRIT*, 2026. OIL PAINTING ON WOODEN PANEL. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

"Among the Birches" Art Exhibition

Grand Opening: October 26th
3:00-4:30 pm
NSCAD Treaty Space Gallery
(1891 Granville St, Halifax NS)

Join us for the opening of a visual arts exhibition co-curated by Jessica Jerome, a Two-Spirit Mi'kmaw artist from the community of Gesgapegiag, Quebec, and the *Zapomniane* (Forgotten) Foundation, a team dedicated to locating and commemorating forgotten Holocaust burial sites. *Zapomniane* will be represented by Aleksandra Janus and Alex Schwarz. The reception will include artists' talks and an audience Q&A.

The exhibition is open to the public and available to view until November 7th.



THE BURIAL SITE OF 12 JEWISH MEN AND WOMEN IN THE VILLAGE OF CHOBOT, POLAND. PHOTO: ALEKSANDER SCHWARZ, ZAPOMNIANE FOUNDATION.

KEYNOTE ROUNDTABLE

“Cultural Preservation and Transmission of Indigenous and Jewish Difficult Histories in Museums”

October 26th, 6.30-8.30 pm
Halifax Central Public Library
5440 Spring Garden Road, Halifax

Scholars John Moses and Erica Lehrer will come together for a conversation about the role of museums in the preservation of material culture and the transmission of Indigenous and Jewish histories. The discussion will be moderated by Lorena Sekwan Fontaine, a leading expert on legacies of residential schools, repatriation of Indigenous ancestors and ancestral belongings, and revitalization of Indigenous languages.

John Moses (Haudenosaunee) is the former Director of Repatriation & Indigenous Relations at the Canadian Museum of History. An Indigenous scholar, advisor, ex-Canadian forces member, and museum practitioner from the Delaware & Upper Mohawk bands, Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, Moses offers specialist knowledge and lived experience on Indigenous issues, with a unique focus on museums and heritage. Currently, Moses is the principal consultant at John Moses ~ Authentic Indigenous Advisory Services for Museums & Heritage Organizations.

Erica Lehrer is a sociocultural anthropologist, historian, and curator. She is Professor in the History Department and past Canada Research Chair in Museum and Heritage Studies (2007-2017) at Concordia University, Montreal, where she is also Founding Director of the Curating and Public Scholarship Lab. Her many publications include *Terribly Close: Polish Vernacular Artists Face the Holocaust (2023)*; *Curatorial Dreams: Critics Imagine Exhibitions (2016)*; and *Jewish Poland Revisited: Heritage Tourism in Unquiet Places (2013)*.

Moderator: **Lorena Sekwan Fontaine** is Cree and Anishinaabe, and a member of the Sagkeeng First Nation in Manitoba. She is Professor and Department Head of the Indigenous Studies Program at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg. She is the author of *Living Language Rights: Constitutional Paths to Indigenous Language Education* and has published articles and spoken nationally and internationally on Indigenous language rights, the legacy of residential schools, and cultural genocide.

An Evening of Films

October 27th, 7:00pm
Halifax Central Library (5440 Spring Garden Road, Halifax NS)

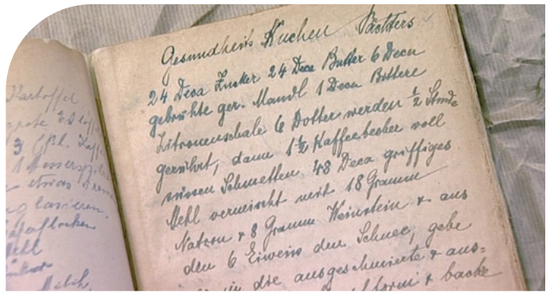
This double feature will show two films on the theme of cultural preservation through material culture. The first film, ***The Basket Maker*** (2017) by award-winning Mi’kmaw documentary filmmaker and producer, Catherine Martin, explores the traditional Mi’kmaq art of basket-making. A member of the Millbrook Mi’kmaw First Nation and a Mi’kmaw Elder, Catherine is also a drummer, teacher, and community activist.

The second film, ***Mina’s Recipe Book: Terezin 1944*** (2017), presents the story of a recipe book created by a female inmate in the Terezin Nazi concentration camp.

The screenings will be followed by a conversation between workshop co-organizer and Holocaust and Genocide scholar, Dorota Głowacka, and Catherine Martin.



Mina’s Recipe Book, courtesy of Icarus Films



Winter 2027 Academic Events

Lunchtime Lehrhaus

In the winter of 2027, we look forward to a new season of our Lunchtime Lehrhaus, featuring the research of local scholars. Here’s a sneak peak of our lineup:

- Dr. Sarah Clift on David Grossman
- Dr. Daphna Levit on S.Y. Agnon
- Dr. Stephen Snobelen on early modern Judaism and the history of science
- Dr. Dorota Głowacka on gender and Holocaust testimonies

See **dal.ca/jewish-studies** and subscribe to our mailing list to stay informed.

Scholar/Artist-in-Residence: Solomon Nagler



Solomon Nagler (NSCAD) is an experimental filmmaker, poet, and Professor of Film Production at NSCAD University. His films have been featured in retrospectives across Canada and internationally, from Paris and Berlin to Australia and New Zealand. His 2025 book of poetry, *piyyut*, draws on Jewish diaspora folktales, mystical thought, and the landscapes of post-Holocaust Europe. A new book, inspired by the wedding songs of the 16th-17th c. Cochin Kabbalist Rabbi Nehemiah ben Abraham Mota, will be released this year.

During his residency at the Centre for Jewish Studies, Nagler will shoot a new experimental film that draws together diverse threads of modern Jewish culture, from Kabbalah to Yiddish politics to 20th century German literature. See **dal.ca/jewish-studies** and subscribe to our mailing list to stay informed about artist talks, workshops, and film screenings!

2027 Student Symposium

An interdisciplinary day-long conference celebrates original research by students at Dalhousie and King’s! With support from faculty mentors and respondents, students will present work in any area of Jewish Studies. A special panel will be reserved for our ACJS Oral History Collaboratory student interviewer team, who will share their work in preserving and documenting Atlantic Jewish stories. A Call for Papers will be distributed by our Outreach Coordinator this Fall.

Association for Canadian Jewish Studies Annual Meeting at Dalhousie University

Late May/early June 2027. Consult **acjs-aejc.ca/conference/** or **dal.ca/jewish-studies** and subscribe to our mailing list to receive updates!

Monday Hebrew Club

Led by Dr. Eva Mroczek

Mondays 1:30 - 2:45 pm
Department of Classics Library
Room 1184, Marion McCain Arts and Social Sciences Building
6135 University Avenue, Halifax

The Monday Hebrew Club is an informal Ancient Hebrew reading group open to everyone with reading knowledge at any level. Beginning readers will practice decoding vocalized texts and learning vocabulary and grammar, with assistance from our Intermediate Biblical Hebrew students. Advanced participants will engage with unpointed texts, manuscripts, and traditional commentary. Our theme for the Fall semester will be Wisdom Literature, from the aphorisms of the Book of Proverbs, the philosophical meditations on justice in the Book of Job, the skepticism of the Book of Qohelet, and developments of these traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Rabbinic literature.

Meet the Program Coordinator



PROGRAM COORDINATOR DOAK

Doak is a historian, musician, artist, and poet born and raised in Halifax, Nova Scotia (Kjipuktuk, Mi'kma'ki). They have a BA in Art History with a minor in Print, Paper, and Book Arts from NSCAD University, and are currently pursuing a BA in History with a double minor in Religious Studies and Esoteric and Occult Traditions and a Certificate in Jewish Studies from Dalhousie University. Their main research interest is the sociological development of esotericism and folk religion, especially the role of Jewish scholars of religion and alchemy within the context of post-Mozarabic book arts in the Iberian Peninsula and Malta.

Previously, they worked as a research assistant for the Centre for inter-Media Arts and Decolonial Expression (CiMADE) at NSCAD University, contributing to events and workshops that supported arts-based research practices in a wide range of disciplines in collaboration with the Treaty Space Gallery and the Anna Leonowens Gallery. They also helped develop the In-Gallery Interpretation program at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, and, through their background in book arts and letterpress printing at the Dawson Print Shop and Bindery, they have experience working with archival materials and historical bookmaking practices.

Doak is excited to be part of the Centre for Jewish Studies and the development of this facet of the Classics Department's programming as a research intern, and will bring their passion for the history of religion and book arts to their work in the Centre.

There is much more we can do. Will you help build Jewish Studies at Dal?

Fund a scholarship in memory of a loved one, expand the Atlantic Jewish Oral History project to reach more families, or help Jewish Studies grow at Dal in other ways. Email us, or if you are ready to support us today, navigate to **give.dal.ca** and choose "Centre for Jewish Studies" from the menu. Every gift makes a difference.



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