Orthodox Judaism in the United States

Sample Syllabus

**Week 1: What is “Orthodoxy?”**

*“Orthodox Judaism” before “Reform?”*


*What Hath Reform Wrought?*


**Week 2: Isaac Leeser and the New Orthodox Agenda**

*A “Hazzan” in Philadelphia*


*Traditional Jewish Life at Mid-Century*


**Week 3: The Nineteenth Century Orthodox Rabbinate**

*Abraham Rice, Morris Raphall, and Bernard Illowy*


Sabato Morais and the “Orthodox” Jewish Theological Seminary
PRIMARY READING: Eleff, Modern Orthodox Judaism, 63-73.


Week 4: The Great Migration from Eastern Europe

Chief Rabbi Jacob Joseph
PRIMARY READING: Eleff, Modern Orthodox Judaism, 79-86.


The Rabbi, the Hazzan and the Butcher


Week 5: Institutionalizing Orthodox Judaism

Agudath Ha-Rabbonim
PRIMARY READING: Eleff, Modern Orthodox Judaism, 92-94.


Orthodox Union and the Everyday Traditional Jew
PRIMARY READING: Harry Fischel, Forty Years of Struggle for a Principle, 14-22; Eleff, Modern Orthodox Judaism, 103-9.


Week 6: Trailblazers

Bernard Revel
PRIMARY READING: Eleff, Modern Orthodox Judaism, 111-24.


Chicago’s Orthodox Option


Week 7: Interwar Orthodox Judaism

The Americanization of the Orthodox Rabbinate
PRIMARY READING: Eleff, Modern Orthodox Judaism, 144-51.


The Americanized Laity
Week 8: The Parting of the Ways of Orthodox and Conservative Judaism

Difficult to Discern
PRIMARY READING: Eleff, *Modern Orthodox Judaism*, 152-64.


Two Separate Movements


Week 9: The Holocaust and the Uneven Postwar Era

The Holocaust and the Suburbs


Rabbi Aharon Kotler and Rabbi Moshe Feinstein


**Week 10: An Orthodox Revival**

**The Rav and the Rebbe**


**A Golden Age for a New Orthodox Jew**


**Week 11: Hassidim and the Ba’al Teshuva Movement**

**The Satmar Community and its Isolationism**


**Orthodox Outreach**


Week 12: The Liberal Declension, Soviet Jewry and “Schisms”

The Liberal Declension
PRIMARY READING: Eleff, Modern Orthodox Judaism, 296-302, 375-95.


Who’s on Top?


Week 13: Orthodox Judaism: “Open” and “Closed”

Sliding to the Right
PRIMARY READING: Gil Perl and Yaakov Weinstein, Parent’s Guide to Orthodox Assimilation; and Eleff, Modern Orthodox Judaism, 364-75.


Sliding to the Left
PRIMARY READING: Eleff, Modern Orthodox Judaism, 409-23.