

*This is a prospectus. The full syllabus will be uploaded on the course website.

JERUSALEM: HOLY CITY

NELC 0014/6414
JWST 0014/6414
REL 0250

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will survey the cultural history of Jerusalem over three millennia with a special focus on its configuration as contested, sacred space in multiple traditions (including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and others). The course will address how Jerusalem acquired its “holy” status on both a micro-level (via sacred spaces within the city) and macro-level (as a target for pilgrimage in competition with other cities in the region). These aspects of the city will be analyzed both as they are depicted in texts and as they are attested in the art and architecture found in Jerusalem and in similar cities in the broader Mediterranean/Middle East. The course will examine how sacred space and sacred urbanism are produced through interactions with texts, artifacts, and built environments. This course is a seminar that will require students to produce original research in written format.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will be able to

1. Summarize the cultural history of Jerusalem, especially as it relates to ritual practice and faith communities.
2. Identify major sacred spaces in Jerusalem, such as Solomon’s Temple, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and the al-Aqsa Mosque.
3. Define and interpret sacred space and how it is configured through ritual action.
4. Synthesize textual and archaeological data in order to analyze a sacred space.
5. Construct, develop, and present original research on Jerusalem or specific monuments within it in written form.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance and Participation – This includes reading upwards of 50 pages of **primary** and **secondary sources** per week, though not every week. These readings must be prepared before the class for which they are assigned.
2. Fundamentals of Research Writing – These are short assignments graded for completion to aid in the production of original written research.
3. Research Paper #1 – A 5-6 page paper analyzing the depiction of space in Jerusalem in a selection of primary sources about the city.
4. Research Paper #2 – A 7-8 page paper analyzing a specific space in Jerusalem using both primary sources and archaeological data.
5. Final Presentation – An oral/digital presentation of Research Paper #2.

GRADUATE REQUIREMENTS

Graduate students will be expected to engage with primary sources in the original languages to the best of their ability. They will also be assigned additional secondary readings. Graduate students will produce a 6-10k term paper of publishable quality by the end of the course, and, to this end, they may elect to replace Research Paper #1 with a component of their final paper (e.g., literature review, methodology, etc.).