Letter from the Director

Dear Friends of Jewish Studies,

As the fall semester is drawing to a close, it is time to reflect and share with you news, students’ contributions and upcoming spring 2016 Jewish Studies courses.

Having returned to campus after spending last spring in India on a Fulbright-Nehru Scholarship, I am pleased to report that our students and faculty are as enthusiastic and committed to our program as before. I am also delighted to announce that Rabbi Sanford Olshansky is joining the Jewish Studies faculty and will be teaching our “Jewish Life and thought” course this coming spring. Several of our students are planning on joining birthright trips to Israel this winter and others will be enrolled in our Tel Aviv University program later this summer. This past month, we welcomed to campus noted author and activist Letty Pogrebin (see photos and articles below), who gave a public presentation on her latest book “Single Jewish Male Seeking Soulmate.” While on campus, she met and discussed with our students her commitments to both Judaism and feminism. As far as student life goes, our Hillel @Rollins weekly Shabbat dinners are very well attended by students, faculty, and community members. Overall, both Jewish Studies and community life at Rollins are thriving.

A few reflections on my Fulbright immersion experience in India. While in Delhi, I taught comparative religion at Jindal Global University and contributed to their newly established Liberal Arts School, which will be sending students to Rollins next year for their dual degree program. My interactions with the students gave me an intimate understanding of this generation and the challenges they face as they try to maintain Indian traditions while assimilating into our globalized and interconnected world. During my Fulbright term, I had opportunities to travel to a number of universities and institutes in India as well as in Sri Lanka, and gave public lectures on topics such as the changing status of women in Judaism. My adventures in the subcontinent included visiting Kolkata and meeting with members of its historic Jewish community. While away, I also made good progress on my forthcoming volume on the comparative studies of Hinduism and Judaism. Overall, it was an extraordinary professional and personal experience for me, as I interacted with folks from all walks of life, from our veggie Walla to philosophers, artists, and the Bene Israel community, whose origins are believed to be from the lost tribes.

In closing, I thank you for the support you continue to provide the Jewish Studies Program at Rollins College. Please consider joining us for any and every one of our programs.

Wishing you a joyful and light-filled Hanukkah and a Happy New Year!!

Sincerely,

Yudit Greenberg

Yudit Kornberg Greenberg, PhD
George and Harriet Cornell Endowed Professor of Religion
Director, Jewish Studies Program
Co-Director, Center for India and South Asia
Rollins College
Winter Park, Florida 32789
407.646.2176
Fulbright-Nerhu Scholar, 2015
What other benefits does the program have to offer students?

Study Abroad programs at the school for overseas students at Tel Aviv University; January and/or May Field Study Courses in Israel; Summer Archaeological digs in Israel; Jewish Studies Center in Prague.

Service learning and internships in such local institutions as the Hebrew Day School, Sunday Schools, The Holocaust Education and Resource Center; The Jewish Community Center; Jewish Family service, and Kinneret, a Jewish home for the aged. Students seeking advice about this interdisciplinary program may contact Dr. Yudit K. Greenberg, Director.

What are the course requirements for this minor? Six courses are required for a minor in Jewish Studies: 2 core courses, 3 electives, and a senior independent study research paper.

PROFESSOR YUDIT GREENBERG, DIRECTOR
George and Harriet Cornell Endowed Professor of Religion
Director of the Jewish Studies Program
Department of Philosophy & Religion
Rollins College, Box 2773
Office: French House 205. T. 407.646.2176
E-mail: yggreenberg@rollins.edu
rollins.edu/jewishstudies

About the Jewish Studies Program:

Jewish studies is the investigation of the Religion, history, and culture of the Jewish people and the study of the interaction of this culture with the civilizations of the world.

This program in Jewish studies at Rollins College identifies and combines courses in the departments of Philosophy and Religion, English, Foreign Languages, Art, Music, and Anthropology. Time periods and geographical areas covered range from ancient Israel to contemporary American Society. The multidisciplinary approach of the program includes biblical studies, art, music, archeology, literature, women’s studies, and philosophy.

Who in particular would benefit from this Jewish Studies minor?

The Jewish Studies minor may be particularly beneficial for students interested in graduate studies in Religious Studies, International Politics, History, Comparative Literature, Foreign Languages, Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies.

In addition, the Jewish Studies Minor serves students who pursue the fields of education, social work, communal service, public administration, law, foreign service, the ministry and/or the rabbinate.

JEWISH STUDIES COURSES

SPRING 2016

English
ENG 231
The Bible as Literature
TR 2 - 3:15 p.m.
O’Sullivan

History
HIS 120
Decade: Holocaust
TR 4 - 5:15 p.m.
Norris

Philosophy & Religion
ICE 100HS
Spiritual Identity
TR 9:30 - 10:45 a.m.
Greenberg

REL 217
Jewish Life & Thought
MW 1 - 2:15 p.m.
Olshansky

REL 219
Islam: History & Beliefs
TR 2 - 3:15 p.m.
French

Political Science
POL 304
Middle East Politics
MWF 11 - 11:50 a.m.
Tatari
When people find out that I’m a religion major they usually ask me if I’m planning on becoming a nun or a preacher. The answer is no. When people find out that I have a Jewish studies minor they frequently ask me if I’m planning on converting. The answer to this question is also no. So why study Judaism if I’m not Jewish? Through the Jewish studies department I have been able to explore many different disciplines integral to a full liberal arts education; history, literature, international relations, gender studies, and archaeology, just to name a few. For a non-Jew, studying the same subjects through a different lens provides an important challenge that is paramount to the study of the liberal arts, the ability to see the world through a perspective outside of one’s own. I had read Kafka before, I had studied the Old Testament at my Catholic high school, but I had never looked at these texts from a Jewish angle.

Within the Jewish studies department, these subjects did not remain in the Ivory Tower of academia, but became real life experiences. Through the department and my studies of Judaism I have had the opportunity to study abroad in Israel, study Jewish literature in the Czech Republic, have dinner with renowned Jewish feminist Letty Cottin Pogrebin, and volunteer and eventually work for a Jewish non-profit. Jewish studies actually ended up becoming the most integrative and experiential aspect of my education, which is of course one of the cornerstones of a true liberal arts education. Frequently, it is hard for students to imagine how their studies will assist them in their future career path, however I have developed tangible research, writing, and analytical skills through Jewish studies, as well as the confidence to explore and understand different cultures and religions. As a graduating senior uncertain of exactly where my education will take me, I feel I have gained skills that will prove valuable in navigating an increasingly globalized job market and exploring future careers.

WHY STUDY Judaism if you aren’t JEWISH?

-issy beham ’16

spending time with LETTY COTTIN POGREBIN

On November 9th, about a dozen students and faculty members got the opportunity to meet and talk with Jewish author and feminist Letty Cottin Pogrebin who recently published her book Single Jewish Male Seeking Soulmate. Pogrebin, a founding editor and writer for the famous Ms. Magazine, is also the author of bestseller Deborah, Golda, and Me, among numerous other works.

In addition to her public presentation in which she spoke about her recent book with Former Congresswoman Pat Schroeder, Ms. Pogrebin enlightened us about her life as a Jewish feminist and how the two did not always mesh well. Her father was very involved in the synagogue while she was growing up, which contributed to her deep knowledge of, and strong identification with Judaism. She constantly challenged norms and was one of the few girls of her time to have a bat mitzvah.

When asked about her book, Pogrebin explained that the protagonist in her book who is the child of Holocaust survivors represents her unspoken childhood awareness of the Holocaust. It was an enlightening evening during which each of us shared our views of religious identities, intermarriage, and feminism.

A big thank you goes to Letty Cottin Pogrebin for spending the time with us and also a big thank you to Dr. Greenberg for planning this dinner event!

-emailey foster ’18
I/We would like to join with a leadership gift to the Jewish Studies Program for $__________

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Winter Park, FL. 32789-4499

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