PRELIMINARY SYLLABUS

Course Description: This course will examine the sources and development of Jewish ethics from Biblical times up to the present. Jewish ethics will be considered in light of other ethical constructs to determine what is particularly “Jewish” about them. How are they conveyed? Is there any systematic approach to this field? The connection between ethics and law and between ethics and ritual in Judaism will be studied in relation to the Jewish life cycle, the holidays and the Sabbath. The process of making ethical decisions will be looked at specifically as it relates to such modern issues such as artificial insemination, stem cell research, cloning, organ transplants, abortion, homosexuality, capital punishment, business, war and peace, as well as post-holocaust considerations, social and political issues and the State of Israel.

Short weekly reaction essays will be collected and there will be a final paper dealing with a specific ethical issue. In addition, each student will be responsible for presenting a case study (actual or fictitious) for discussion, based on the reading for that week’s class session.

Textbooks:

Required:


Recommended:


Hartford Seminary Email Policy: I will use the official Hartsem student email addresses for all communications. Please check your Hartsem email account regularly. Announcements and curricular material will be posted on the SONISWEB site.

Attendance policy: Attendance in class is required. If you know you will be unable to attend a class session please inform me in advance. Missing two sessions will result in an automatic lowering of your final grade by 10%. Missing three or more sessions will result in automatic failure of the course.

Office Hours: Before and after each class session.