

**HIS/JDS 225**  
**Jewish History: From Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages**

Satisfies: CER, GLO [DEC: J]

**Thematic Categories:** Arts, Ideas & Culture;  
Race, Religion, Gender & Sexualities

TuTh, 2:30pm-4:00pm

Professor Eric Miller

The Jews of late antiquity provide an excellent case study of a community seeking to preserve its existence and its distinctive ways of life in times of rapid and bewildering change. This course will deal with the life and history of the Jewish people, and the development of the Jewish religion, from Antiquity to just before the rise of Islam. We shall begin with the biblical heritage of ancient Israel and follow the continuing evolution of that heritage with special focus on the Babylonian exile, Persian rule, and the place of the Jews in the turbulent world of the Greeks and the Romans. The course will end with the “triumph” of Christianity on the "outside" of Jewish life and the consolidation of rabbinic leadership on the "inside." We will also spend considerable time in detailed study of important primary documents. Classes are based on lectures with discussion of readings, a mid-term, final exam, and two research papers.