

Hebrew Minor

Hebrew is the language of Israel, which is the birthplace of Judaism and Christianity and a central location for Islam and the Bahá'í faith. Many students study Hebrew in order to understand and demonstrate proficiency in the complex issues of the Middle East, to travel and work in the region, to gain access to Israeli news media, acquire skills relevant to majors and minors such as Government, Political Economy, Justice and Peace Studies, History, Theology and Religious Studies, Classics, Linguistics, Jewish Civilization and any of the internationally-focused SFS majors. Students also learn Hebrew to communicate with Israeli friends and family, understand prayers and the Hebrew Bible, and learn about the rich culture and history, modern and ancient, of Israel and the Middle East. Israel is one of the world's fastest-growing high-tech economies and a country of fundamental importance in the Middle East and on the world stage. For students interested in the Middle East region in the fields of politics, diplomacy, conflict resolution, security studies, history or business, a knowledge of Hebrew is invaluable.

Hebrew is a northwest, Semitic language belonging to the Canaanite family of languages within the Afro-Asiatic language group. It is written in a non-Latin script, however the alphabet has only twenty-two letters and each vowel possesses a one-to-one correlation with a sound. The grammar is largely structured around three-letter roots which allow for a fast-expanding vocabulary range, because one may understand the meaning or context of many words deriving from the same root. For example, the root SFR is used for *sefer* ("book"), *sifriah* ("library"), *safran* ("librarian"), *sipur* ("story"), *sofer* ("author"), *sifrut* ("literature"), *sifrut* ("literary"), *mesaper* ("storyteller"), *beit sefer* ("school") and many other related words.

Hebrew is the language of the Bible, which is the religious and cultural cornerstone of Western Civilization. Modern Hebrew is the simplest conduit into Biblical Hebrew, which contributes to approximately 85% of the 1,000 most commonly used words in Modern Hebrew. The influence of Hebrew on American life is vast. Until a century ago, Hebrew was a required classical language alongside Greek and Latin for university students at many American institutions (whose logos bore Hebrew inscriptions: Harvard, Brown, Princeton, Johns Hopkins, Pennsylvania, Yale, Columbia, Dartmouth – the last three of which still bear Hebrew seals). Many Hebrew words from the Bible are used in English, among them: alphabet, sabbath, amen, abbot, messiah, hallelujah, hosanna, manna, cherubim, seraphim, satan, shibboleth, leviathan, horn, camel, jubilee, scallions, gauze, Armageddon and behemoth. Many Hebrew idioms from the Bible are also used in English today such as "with a heavy heart", "the skin of his teeth," "a drop in the bucket," and many more.

Ancient Hebrew flourished as a spoken language in the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah during the period approximately 1200 to 586 BCE. Modern Hebrew is a descendent of ancient Hebrew, which was dormant as a spoken language for approximately two millennia, and is the only ancient, dormant language to be successfully revived. The revival of Hebrew occurred in the nineteenth-century, largely by the linguist Eliezer ben-Yehuda, through an adaptation of Biblical Hebrew to modern times. Modern Hebrew is often studied as a complement to the study of related Semitic languages, such as Arabic (which has a parallel grammar system), and in conjunction with Persian in preparation for work in and on the Middle East. Hebrew is related to the living languages of Arabic, Maltese, Amharic, Tigre, Tigrinya, Neo-

Aramaic, Judeo-Aramaic and Syriac, and to the ancient languages of Phoenician, Moabite, Punic, Classical Aramaic, Amorite, Ugaritic, Nabatean, Sabaeen and Akkadian.

Georgetown has a robust Hebrew Program that offers undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to acquire and demonstrate proficiency in a language that will be of central importance to their careers. Students who pursue the minor in Hebrew from Georgetown will have a strong background in the language and culture of a major power in the Middle East and a more comprehensive understanding of the complex issues in the region.

For more information about the minor, visit the program website (<https://cjc.georgetown.edu/academics/hebrew-language/>) or contact the coordinator of the Hebrew Program, Dr. Meital Orr, at hebrew@georgetown.edu. (hebrew@georgetown.edu)

Requirements

Requirements for the Minor

The minor in Hebrew requires a minimum of six courses (18 credits). All students minoring in Hebrew, and entering the program without previous knowledge, are required to take:

Code	Title	Credits
HEBR 1001	Intensive Beginning Hebrew	6
HEBR 1002	Intensive Beginning Hebrew II	6
HEBR 2001	Interm Modern Hebrew I	3
HEBR 2002	Interm Modern Hebrew II	3
HEBR 3001	Advanced Modern Hebrew I	3
HEBR 3002	Advanced Modern Hebrew II	3
Total Credits		24

Students who begin their study of Hebrew beyond the Beginning Hebrew I level, are required to take the Hebrew Placement Exam and complete all remaining Hebrew courses, up to and including Advanced Hebrew II. At minimum, two Hebrew language courses (6 credits) must be completed for the minor: Advanced Hebrew I and Advanced Hebrew II. *Students may then substitute additional courses with Hebrew and Israel-related content, offered at the Center for Jewish Civilization (CJC) and Georgetown, to meet the 18-credit requirement for the Hebrew minor, with approval from the Head of the Hebrew Program.*

Supplemental courses in Israel Studies at the Center for Jewish Civilization (CJC) will vary by semester in topics such as:

- Israeli History
- Israeli Culture
- Israeli Domestic Policy
- Israeli Security Studies
- Israeli Foreign Policy
- Israeli Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution

A sample of courses offered in Spring 2023, include:

Code	Title	Credits
JCIV 1759	Untangle ME Relig/Polit/Ethnic	3
JCIV 1770	ReExmn Isr-Pal Crisis:Lit/Film	3

JCIV 2762	Israel and World Politics	3
JCIV 2772		3
JCIV 4750	Statecraft and Negotiation	3

A sample of courses offered in Fall 2023, include:

Code	Title	Credits
JCIV 2758	Congress&Making ME Foreign Pol	3
JCIV 2970	Israel & the Arab+Muslim World	3
JCIV 3751	Hist of Peace-Making:Mid East	3
JCIV 4447	Palestine, Judaism, and Islam	3

Additional courses at the Center for Jewish Civilization (CJC) and Georgetown, with content related to Hebrew language or Israel, transfer courses or study abroad courses from high schools and universities in and outside the U.S, and the Hebrew SAT II or AP Hebrew Exam, may count toward the Hebrew minor with approval from the coordinator of the Hebrew program.