

FRANKELY SPEAKING



LSA

JEAN & SAMUEL FRANKEL
CENTER FOR JUDAIC STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

FALL 2026

From the Director



Maya Barzilai
Director of the Frankel Center
for Judaic Studies

I'm thrilled to resume the directorship of the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies after a year of leave, during which Deborah Dash Moore, historian of American Jews and photography, led the Center with great expertise and enthusiasm. I am deeply grateful to Deborah for supporting the 2025–2026 Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies devoted to Jews and Media, which included the largest public event our Institute has ever hosted: the Jewish Film Symposium. Our film screenings and discussions, as part of this symposium, drew a broad audience and revealed how the Frankel Institute contributes to a vibrant campus culture at the University of Michigan.

Alongside Deborah, Devi Mays, historian of Sephardic Jewry, worked tirelessly as Associate Director to advance curricular development and undergraduate programming. Thanks to Devi, and to our former and current student services coordinators, Frankel Center classes are overflowing, as students seek to learn about Jewish history, ritual, scripture, and culture. As Devi steps down from this role, I am happy to welcome Mostafa Hussein as our new Associate Director. Mostafa researches and teaches the history and culture of Jewish–Arab/Muslim relations in the modern Middle East, and he brings a wealth of teaching experience and innovation to this role. I also take this opportunity to congratulate Mostafa on earning his well-deserved promotion to the rank of Associate Professor with tenure!

This coming year, the Frankel Institute will tackle a pernicious and constantly evolving issue—antisemitism. We are fortunate to have two experts on this topic, Karla Goldman and Jeffrey Veidlinger, at the helm, and a group of international fellows

“I warmly invite students, faculty, and community members to share in the rich offerings of the Frankel Center in the year to come.”

who bring cutting-edge theoretical approaches and new insights into the histories and manifestations of antisemitism in the United States and across the globe. Karla and Jeff have each been researching local histories of antisemitism at the University of Michigan and the Great Lakes region. Several fellows look to the ancient and medieval past to learn about antisemitism, while others ask questions about antisemitism in the aftermath of October 7. These diverse projects stand to enrich one another as fellows collaborate and offer feedback on new ideas and directions. We invite you all to share in the outcomes of these discussions through a series of public events that include the fellows and guest speakers. Please be on the lookout!

I take this opportunity to mark the retirement of two faculty members who played a formative role in our community through their insightful scholarship, generous teaching, and creative endeavors: Elliot Ginsburg, scholar of Jewish mysticism and thought, and author of *The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah*, along with numerous articles; and Ruth Tsoffar, scholar of Hebrew literature, Bible, and gender studies, and author, most recently, of *Life in Citations: Biblical Narratives and Contemporary Hebrew*

Culture. Rutie and Elliot, in their different ways, introduced a spirit of openness, honesty, and compassion to the Frankel Center, which has nourished us and proven particularly essential over the tumultuous past three years. They encouraged their colleagues and students to be present to the sounds, smells, feelings, and breath of Jewish texts and practices. Their retirement celebration was joyful, humorous, and moving, as they shared with faculty, students, family, and friends their academic life lessons, or “ethical will.” We will miss Rutie and Elliot around the Center table, but will continue to learn from them as they embark on new projects and initiatives.

Throughout all these changes, one constant allows the Frankel Center and Institute not merely to operate smoothly but also to innovate and grow: our dedicated staff. They are resourceful, welcoming, and efficient, and I am grateful for their ongoing support: Cheri Thompson (Chief Admin), Michele Fleming (Executive Assistant), Caitlyn Gordon (Communications and Events Coordinator), and Laura Pasek (Student Services Coordinator).

In closing, I warmly invite students, faculty, and community members to share in the rich offerings of the Frankel Center in the year to come. My door is open to all, and my inbox awaits your suggestions and contributions.

Maya Barzilai

Director of the Frankel Center
for Judaic Studies

Gabriele Boccaccini, *Estudios Iberoamericano en torno al Judaísmo del Segundo Templo* (2025)

Jesse DeGrado, *Assyria's Plunder: From Ancient Empire to Modern Loot* (2026)

Olga Gershenson, *The Oxford Handbook of Judaism and Film* (2026)

Mostafa Hussein, *Hebrew Orientalism: Jewish Engagement with Arabo-Islamic Culture in Late Ottoman and British Palestine* (2025)

Erica Lehrer, *Awkward Objects: Expanding the Boundaries of the Holocaust Archive* (2025)

Deborah Dash Moore, *The Future of the American Jewish Past* (2025)

Anita Norich, *Hand in Hand* by Rashel Veprinski; translated by Ellen Cassedy and Anita Norich (2025), and *The Collected Works of Esther Kreitman* (2026)





Celebrating the Next Generation

The University of Michigan's Frankel Center for Judaic Studies Class of 2026

By Laura Pasek
Student Services
Coordinator

The Frankel Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan is proud to announce the graduation of its Class of 2026. This year's ceremony, featuring remarks by Associate Director Devi Mays and Interim Director Deborah Dash Moore, celebrated a diverse and highly accomplished group of students dedicated to the study of Jewish history, culture, and language.



Gabrielle Taichman receives the Deborah Dash Moore Award for Academic Excellence.



Pragya Kayul receives her PhD certificate from Professor Deborah Dash Moore.



Noah Marks receives the Outstanding Yiddish Student Award from Professor Elena Luchina.



Undergraduate Achievements

The undergraduate program currently supports 11 major and 31 minor students. The Class of 2026 includes 22 graduating students, all of whom have completed a minor in Judaic Studies alongside a wide array of primary majors including psychology, biomolecular science, industrial & operations engineering, and public policy.

Several students were recognized for their exceptional academic contributions:

- **Gabrielle Taichman:** *Deborah Dash Moore Award for Academic Excellence*
- **Gaya Pedersen:** *Jeffrey Veidlinger Award for Dedication to the Frankel Center*
- **Samantha Caminker:** *Outstanding Undergraduate Essay Award*
- **Noah Marks:** *Outstanding Yiddish Student Award*

The Center distributed Judaic Studies minors to 22 students:

- **Camila Baca Ante:** *Psychology major*
- **Daniel Bernstein:** *Communication and Media major; Global Media Studies minor*
- **Eitan Borenstein:** *Biomolecular Science major; Computer Science minor*
- **Jordan Goldstein:** *International Studies major (International Security, Norms and Cooperation subplan); Entrepreneurship minor*
- **Hannah Goldwin:** *Biology, Health, and Society major*
- **Eli Greenberg:** *History major*

- **Mitchell Greenberger:** *International Studies major (International Security, Norms and Cooperation subplan)*
- **Ethan Grey:** *Biology, Health, and Society major*
- **Elijah Hall:** *Composition major (Percussion subplan); Performance major (Percussion subplan)*
- **Sydney Jacob:** *Organizational Studies major*
- **Callie Mayer:** *Communication and Media major*
- **Ella Neuwirth:** *Political Science major; Public Policy minor*
- **Charles Niehaus:** *Industrial & Operations Engineering major*
- **Alana Rosen:** *Communication and Media major; Business Administration minor*
- **Philip Sayah:** *History major; Political Science minor*
- **Isaiah Singer:** *Biology, Health, and Society major; Business Administration minor*
- **Alexis Spector:** *Political Science major*
- **Gabrielle Taichman:** *History major (Honors subplan); Political Science minor*
- **Benjamin Tankel:** *Economics major; International Studies major (Political Economic and Development subplan)*
- **Peter Wathen:** *History major; Political Science major*
- **Andrew Weider:** *Public Policy major*
- **Abigail Winner:** *International Studies major (International Security, Norms and Cooperation subplan); Political Science major*

Graduate Excellence

The Frankel Center also celebrates its 21 students currently enrolled in the Judaic Studies Graduate Certificate program. This year's graduating cohort includes PhD candidates from various disciplines, including:

- **Emilie Duranceau-Lapointe** (*History*)
- **Brittany Joyce** (*Greek and Roman History*)
- **Pragya Kaul Guido** (*History*)
- **Allen Kendall** (*Ancient History, Greek and Roman History*)

The Frankel Center remains a vibrant hub for academic excellence at the University of Michigan, and we look forward to the continued success of our 2026 graduates as they bring their expertise into the wider world.

Welcoming the 2026–27 Frankel Institute Fellows



The 2026–27 “Rethinking Antisemitism” Frankel Institute Theme year convenes an international group of fellows to examine how anti-Jewish policies and attitudes manifest themselves in varied regions and eras; how they shape the realities and social position of Jews and Jewish communities; and how Jewish communities are responding today and have responded historically. The urgency of convening scholars to consider these issues and questions emerges from the heightened political and social stakes of current global affairs. Many Jews around the world are considering whether the social contracts that seemed to secure their safety and place in civic, campus, and general societal spaces are illusory. In the face of these changing public realities and shifting discourses, fellows will reexamine prevailing views on antisemitism, test methods to better measure its impact and prevalence, and search for effective means to identify, combat, and limit its influence. Fellows will participate in a series of public panels examining several dimensions of this theme (see pg. 13).

The 2026–2027 Frankel Fellows and their fields of research

Karla Goldman (Co-Head Fellow), University of Michigan, “‘Their Presence is Not Altogether Welcome’: Archival Interventions into the University of Michigan’s Narratives of Inclusion”

Jeff Veidlinger (Co-Head Fellow), University of Michigan, “Pure Michigan: A History of Antisemitism in the Great Lakes Region”

Tova Benjamin, Davidson College, “Storming the South: Global Trade, Social Unrest, and the Violent Makings of Ethnicity in the Russian Empire, 1871–1905”

Matt Berkman, Oberlin College, “The ‘New Anti-Semitism Paradigm’ Since October 7: A Critical Juncture?”

Heather Blurton, University of California, Santa Barbara, “Piety and Prejudice: The Ritual Crucifixion Accusation in Late Medieval England”

Ben Bornstein, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, “The Hermeneutics of Antisemitism: Jewish Sense-Making of October 7th and its Aftermath”

Jonathan Elukin, Trinity College, “A New Intellectual History of Antisemitism and Racism”

Deborah Forger, University of Michigan, “Weaponizing the Gospel: The Afterlives of John and the Making of Christian Antisemitism”

Jonathan Judaken, Washington University in Saint Louis, “Remnant and Renaissance: Being Jewish in French Philosophy after Auschwitz”

Alice Mishkin, University of Michigan, “They are Anti-Jewish Because They’re Anti-Israel: American Jews, Palestine Solidarity, and Antisemitism in the Post-October 7th Era”

Cassandra Euphrat Weston, University of Michigan, “White Slavers, Bolsheviks, and Special Prosecutors: Sex, Jews, and the American State, 1906–1929”

Marcel Stoetzler, Bangor University, “The Place of Antisemitism in the Changing Theorizations of Racism”

Ryan Szpiech, University of Michigan, “The Body of Belief: Rethinking Antisemitism and the Premodern ‘Social Body’”

Students



Denisa Glacová received the Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award from Rackham Graduate School, and was offered a

Scholar-in-Residence position at the Prague Branch of the German Historical Institute Warsaw (GHIW) for fall 2026.



Thomas Kestler delivered a talk titled “Cats, Jews, and Darwin: The Struggle for Existence in the Eyes of Marx, Engels, and

Dühring” at the 8th Biennial German Jewish Studies Workshop, University of Notre Dame, IN.



Andrea Gondos spent the summer as a Summer Fellow at the Institute of Humanities and published an article titled “Stolen Children and Monstrous Change-

lings: Lilith as the Demon-Mother in Eastern European Magical Manuscripts” in *Jewish Thought*.



Cara Rock-Singer received a Jordan Schnitzer First Book Publication Award for her forthcoming book, *Gestating Judaism: The Corporeal Technologies of American Jewish Religion* (University of Chicago Press).



Rebecca Wollenberg received a 2026 Individual Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education from the U-M College of

Literature, Science, & the Arts for her classroom teaching and work on the Pluralism Playdeck.



Emilie Duranceau-Lapointe was named a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Fritz Bauer Institute in Frankfurt am Main, Germany.



Brittany Joyce received the American Dissertation Fellowship from the American Association of University Women.



Erica Lehrer published the article “Unpacking Righteousness: Material Legacies of Aid to Jews in Nazi-Occupied Poland” in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*.

Sophie Pardo-Reed received the Brickman Levin Fellowship and Tam Institute for Jewish Studies Fellowship from Emory University.



Sam Shuman received the Budapest Open Society Fellowship from the Central European University, Institute for Advanced Study

(CEU-IAS), and published an article titled “‘I Never Looked into a Diamond’: The Transparent Ignorance of Diamond Brokers” in *How Transparency Works: Ethnographies of a Global Value* (Cambridge University Press).

Faculty



Alex Averbuch published two articles: “Jewish Solicitory Poetry in the Eighteenth-Century Russian Empire: Materiality, Poetics, Diplomacy”

in *AJS Review*, and “Bewitching the Tsar: Kabbalistic Hermeneutics and Hebrew Pictographic Poetry” in *East European Jewish Affairs*.

Alumni



Jessica Evans was named Vice President of Philanthropy & Engagement at Hillel International.



JCLP's Journey to Jewish Baltimore

By Morgan Hesse
Graduate Student

Each year, U-M's Jewish Communal Leadership Program (JCLP) goes on a trip as a full cohort to immerse themselves in a Jewish community, expand their knowledge of Jewish history, and strengthen cohort bonds. This year, the JCLP was honored to travel to Baltimore as Travel Fellows of the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies. On their first full day, JCLP students met alumna Ali Duhan at The Associated Network, the Jewish Federation of Baltimore, where she put together a panel of leaders from different Jewish organizations and foundations in the Baltimore community to discuss the scope and impact of their work.

This panel gave students a wide perspective of not only Jewish life in Baltimore, but also of what communal leadership and fundraising efforts look like in the city. These leaders shared their experiences addressing violence within Jewish communities, supporting low-income families, and providing education as a way to strengthen Jewish nonprofits and combat prevalent myths in the Jewish community. The JCLP's visit to the Associated was thought-provoking as students were able to practically consider the various facets of communal work by speaking with people who are actively enmeshed in this Jewish community, rather than talking amongst themselves about the theoretical aspects of working within a community.

The next morning, JCLP students were welcomed by Rabbi Jessy Dressin to Third Space at Shaarei Tfiloh, where they talked about the different ways in which Baltimore's synagogues and organizations strive to connect with young Jewish adults and young Jewish families in the area. They also



discussed how the Third Space community events focus on one's ability to partake of Jewishness outside distinctly Jewish spaces. The accessibility of practicing Judaism has come up a few times in the JCLP seminar; it was affirming to hear this issue being thought through on a larger community level. Later, we visited Johns Hopkins Hillel and met with Monica Davis and Rabbi Debbie Pine. Students heard from these leaders about the ways in which the Hopkins Hillel caters to its community, offering services for different denominations each week, as well as kosher dinners. That evening, we had the opportunity to attend a Friday night Shabbat service at the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation and talk to Rabbi Andrew Busch after services about the mobilization of the Jewish community throughout the city. Through this mini-lecture, JCLP students developed a deeper understanding of how interconnected the Jewish community of Baltimore is due to its lively history. After services, the cohorts shared a Shabbat dinner together, which was a beautiful encapsulation of the values of the JCLP: collectiveness, sharing traditions, and deepening the sense of community.

On Saturday morning, students attended a Shabbat service and kiddush lunch at Beth Am Synagogue. The morning left JCLP students feeling engaged with the community thanks to the spirited conversations at each table; it was another reminder of the impact of building Jewish community. That afternoon, we were taken on a walking tour led by Dr. Eric Goldstein, Director of the Tam Institute for Jewish Studies at Emory University, and Dr. Deborah Weiner, an independent researcher. The tour brought to life all of the history we had heard about on our trip, allowing us to physically orient ourselves in Baltimore and experience some of its stunning architecture.

Spending a long weekend in Baltimore allowed the JCLP students to truly immerse themselves in a community distinctly different from their own in Ann Arbor. The students reflected on their love of learning, what it has taken to build such a strong Jewish community within the JCLP, and how important it is to continue using their voices to enact positive change in the world.

Student Travel and Research

Invested in Excellence

Students at the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies had the opportunity to travel for research, language study, and conference attendance thanks to the generous support of our longstanding donors.

Undergraduate

Maya Atzmon traveled to Germany, Poland, Austria, and the Czech Republic to research how European cities integrate Holocaust remembrance into urban spaces.



Samantha Caminker studied Hebrew at an intensive seven-week program at the Middlebury School of Hebrew in Middlebury, Vermont.

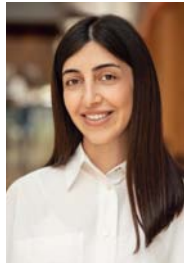
Jonah Frenkel traveled to Lima and Cuzco, Peru to research the local Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities and the growing influence of Chabad in the diaspora.

Gaya Pedersen was awarded the Frankel Summer Travel Fellowship to visit Spain, Denmark, and Poland to study resistance movements against antisemitic groups, which will help define her senior thesis.

Graduate



Martin Amesquita conducted research for the final chapter of his dissertation at the Center for Jewish History in New York City.



Emma Avagyan attended the 24th International Summer Seminar in Yiddish Language and Culture in Warsaw, Poland.



Asa Brunet-Jailly delivered a talk on “Memory, Death Tourism, and Medievalist Musings: Anglo-Jewish Self-Fashioning in Hermann Gollancz’s

“A Ramble in East Anglia” (1894–5)” at the University of London’s 2026 British and Irish Association of Jewish Studies Annual Conference.



Denisa Glacová traveled to Salzburg, Austria to present a talk titled “Queer at the Edge of Time: Reimagining the Jewish East in the Post-Habsburg Prague Modernity”

at the Austrian Studies Association Conference.

Niv Fisher-Pinsker attended a 16-week clinical internship at the Jewish Social Service Agency (JSSA) in Washington, DC and applied the social infrastructure of a legacy Jewish agency to address a surging family homelessness crisis in the area.



Alice Mishkin delivered a talk titled “Fighting the Weaponization of Antisemitism as Jewish Faculty and Graduate Students” with Professor Emily Schneider (Northern

Arizona University) at the Decolonial Conference in Los Angeles.

Student Engagement

Dialogue Across Difference



Kristen Morganstern presented two talks: “Progressive Jews & Jewish Progressives: Organizing and Identity in the New Jewish Agenda” at the AJHS Biennial Scholars’ Conference in Cleveland,

OH, and “College Town Jews: Liberal Organizing in 1980s Ann Arbor, Michigan” at the University of London’s 2026 British and Irish Association of Jewish Studies Annual Conference.

Amelia Roth-Dishy presented two talks: “Creating Culture, Performing Patriotism: Ladino Theater in New York, 1914–1918” at the AJHS Biennial Scholars’ Conference in Cleveland, OH, and “Ladino–Language Theater and Political Fundraising in New York during World War I” at the University of London’s 2026 British and Irish Association of Jewish Studies Annual Conference.



Mimi Wooten presented a talk titled “Photographing the Modern Sephardi Diaspora” at the AJHS Biennial Scholars’ Conference in Cleveland, OH.

How can students with sharply different commitments learn to speak and listen to one another with curiosity, trust and respect? While teaching courses on religion, gender, race and other contested subjects, Associate Professor Rebecca Wollenberg noticed that students wanted meaningful dialogue but often lacked the confidence and practical skills to begin. After semesters of experimentation, she developed exercises in listening, self-reflection, perspective-taking and emotional regulation. These became *The Pluralism Workbook* and its companion card game, the *Pluralism Playdeck*.



“I believe dialogue across differences is best taught using play with purpose,” Wollenberg wrote for the Office of the Provost. “Through play, we can bypass

our threat response and break out of inherited scripts to see creative new angles on contentious issues.” The Playdeck, developed with Assistant Professor Sangseraima Ujeed, encourages students from across the university to discuss gender, religion, ethnicity and socioeconomic status—topics many had not previously discussed outside class.

The workbook is dedicated to the memory of U–M alumna Samantha Woll, who died while deeply engaged in dialogue work. Woll is remembered as someone who could speak naturally with people holding varied views and bring them together across differences. Woll’s example inspired Wollenberg to explore whether those skills could be taught to a new generation of LSA students.

Following its publication in December 2024, the workbook quickly moved beyond Wollenberg’s courses. It has been used at U–M and other universities in settings ranging from small seminars to 60–student lectures. U–M also assigned it to first-year nursing students preparing to discuss contested issues in contemporary care, and hundreds of copies were distributed to incoming students during fall 2025 orientation. In winter 2026, this project earned Wollenberg an Individual Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education from the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Fall 2026

Me, Myself, and AI: Where Human Creativity and Algorithms Intersect

Wednesday, September 23, 2026

5:00 – 6:30 PM

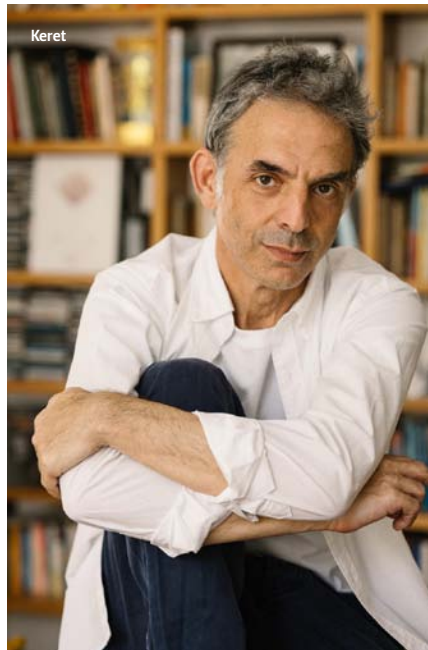
**Rackham Graduate School,
Amphitheatre (4th Floor)**

Guest Speaker: **Etgar Keret**

Etgar Keret is a celebrated Israeli author and filmmaker known for his unique, surreal, and darkly comedic short stories. Keret spent time engaging with AI models to test the limits of what a machine could generate about stories and narratives. In his talk “Me, Myself, and AI,” Keret notably explores the intersection of human creativity and algorithms.



[More Details](#)



Born in Ramat Gan in 1967, Etgar Keret is a leading voice in Israeli literature and film. His books have been published in over four dozen languages and his writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Le Monde*, *The New Yorker*, *The Guardian*, *The Paris Review*, and *Zoetrope*, among others. Over 100 short films and several feature films have been based on his stories. He has received the Book Publishers Association of Israel's Platinum Prize

several times, as well as the Newman Prize for Literature (2012). In 2010, Keret was honored in France with the decoration of Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, and he was awarded the 2016 Charles Bronfman Prize. In 2007, Keret and Shira Geffen won the Cannes Film Festival's “Caméra d'Or” award for their movie *Jellyfish*, and Best Director Award from the French Society of Dramatic Authors and Composers. The two also co-wrote and directed “The Middleman” (2019), a French miniseries for ARTE, which won the best screenplay award at Festival de la Fiction in La Rochelle. His last collection, *Fly Already*, won Israel's most prestigious literary award, the Sapir Prize (2018) and a National Jewish Book Award (2019). Since 2021, he has been publishing the weekly newsletter “Alphabet Soup” on Substack. In 2022, Keret presented an exhibition about his mother at the Jewish Museum Berlin. His newest short-story collection is *Autocorrect*.



Autocorrect (2025), *The Seven Good Years* (2015), and *Suddenly A Knock on the Door* (2010) by the author will be available for purchase at this event.

Fall 2026

Contemporary Antisemitism

A “Rethinking Antisemitism”

Frankel Institute Event



[More Details](#)

Monday, October 12, 2026

4:00–6:00 PM

Room 2022, South Thayer Building

Panelists: Alice Mishkin, Ben Bornstein, and Matt Berkman (all 2025–26 Frankel Institute Fellows)



2026 Padnos Public Lecture on Jewish Engagement

Divine Bodies, Human Questions: How Ancient Jews and Christians Imagined God



[More Details](#)

Thursday October 15, 2026

7:00–8:30 PM

Devos Center for Interprofessional Health (DCIH),
GVSU Health Campus

Speaker: Deborah Forger

Respondent: Jeremiah Cataldo

If you cannot attend this lecture in person, RSVP for virtual attendance to receive a lecture recording following the event.



Is Hate Speech Free Speech?

A “Rethinking Antisemitism”

Frankel Institute Event



[More Details](#)

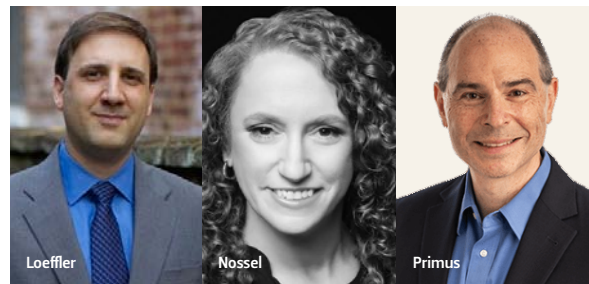
Tuesday, November 17, 2026

4:00–6:00 PM

Rackham Graduate School,
Amphitheatre (4th Floor)

Panelists: James Loeffler (John Hopkins)
Suzanne Nossel (Lester Crown Senior Fellow at
The Chicago Council on Global Affairs)
Moderator: Richard Primus (University of Michigan)

Co-Sponsored by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute for Antisemitism



Violence and Antisemitism

A “Rethinking Antisemitism”

Frankel Institute Event



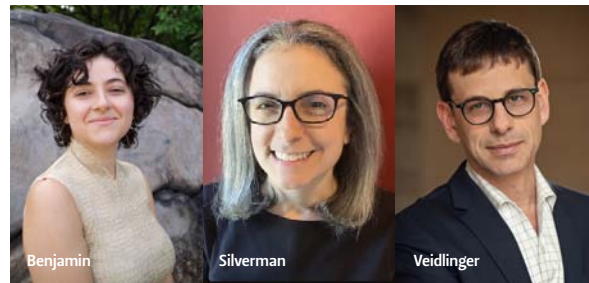
[More Details](#)

Tuesday, December 1, 2026

4:00–6:00 PM

Room 2022, South Thayer Building

Panelists: Tova Benjamin (2026–27 Frankel Institute Fellow)
Lisa Silverman (University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee)
Jeff Veidlinger (2026–27 Frankel Institute Co-Head Fellow)



Winter 2027

Theoretical Approaches to Antisemitism

A “Rethinking Antisemitism”
Frankel Institute Event

Tuesday, February 23, 2027

4:00–6:00 PM

Room 2022, South Thayer Building

Panelists: Johnathan Judaiken,
Johnathan Eluken, and Marcel Stoetzler
(all 2026–27 Frankel Institute Fellows)



[More Details](#)

Antisemitism and the Body

A “Rethinking Antisemitism”
Frankel Institute Event

Tuesday, March 16, 2027

4:00–6:00 PM

Room 2022, South Thayer Building

Panelists: Heather Blurton,
Cassandra Euphrat Weston, and Ryan Szpiech
(all 2026–27 Frankel Institute Fellows)



[More Details](#)

37th Annual David W. Belin Lecture

Thursday, April 8, 2027

5:30 PM: Pre-Lecture Catered Reception

6:00 PM: Belin Lecture

7:00 PM: Book Sales & Signing

Michigan League, Vandenberg Room

Guest Speaker: Sarah Imhoff



Sarah Imhoff is the Jay and Jeanie Schottenstein Chair in Jewish Studies and Associate Professor in the Department of Religious Studies and the Borns Jewish Studies Program at Indiana University. She writes about religion and the body with a particular interest in gender, sexuality, and disability, as

well as maintaining a research specialty in religion and law. She is author of *Masculinity and the Making of American Judaism* (Indiana University Press, 2017) and *The Lives of Jessie Sampter: Queer, Disabled, Zionist* (Duke University Press, 2022). She is the founding co-editor of the journal *American Religion*.



[More Details](#)

Stay Connected!

Scan the QR code to join our email list and receive updates about these events and more.



2027–2028 Fellowship Opportunity

Rethinking Jewish Peoplehood: Towards a New Archive

Who is a Jew? What makes something Jewish? Is Judaism a religion or ethnicity, or both? What is Jewish peoplehood and (if such a phenomenon even exists) how is it constituted? These issues have been interrogated in great depth by scholars of modern Judaism(s). But we often write as if such questions only emerged with the complications of early modernity—as if premodern Jewishness were an organic and self-explanatory category uncomplicated by questions of how, why, and with whom to be Jewish. The theme year “Rethinking Jewish Peoplehood: Towards a New Archive” seeks to move beyond the horizon of modernity to interrogate the ways Jewishness was constructed among a diverse set of premodern Jewish communities and thinkers—uncovering forgotten historical models of Jewish belonging and reshaping our sense of what it meant to be a Jew in the premodern world.

Research on premodern Judaism(s) has, of course, considered the question of Jewish identity and how it was constituted. But scholars who have ventured to interrogate these questions have largely focused (albeit critically) on those strains of premodern thought that gave birth to currently hegemonic conceptions of Jewishness. This theme year proposes to (re)visit the premodern past in a different register. We will gather scholars working to complicate our understanding of how concepts such as Jewishness, ethno-religion, peoplehood, Jewish racial and ethnic diversity, conversion, Jewish-adjacent practitioners, and Jewish belonging have been constructed and utilized in premodern Jewish communities and literatures.

While our research will remain firmly rooted within our individual expertise in late antique or medieval Judaism(s), this theme year will also push participants to consider the ways in which we can begin to integrate research of different periods on these questions—acknowledging that the construction of Jewishness has always been complicated, contested, and diverse. Specifically, we will consider how different historical models of imagining Jewish belonging might offer affordances for thinking about present phenomena. Our historical research will be premised on the principle that the archive is not static. Perceptions of the Jewish past are constantly remade as texts and histories are suppressed and forgotten—through uneven patterns of preservation, publication, translation and pedagogy. But we work in a moment when more of the archive than ever is available to be reexamined and Rethinking Jewish Peoplehood invites researchers to engage with the archive in ways that expand and even transform our conceptual frameworks for understanding what it means to be Jewish.

We invite scholars, experts, and practitioners from an array of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences to join us in this multidisciplinary exploration. We encourage applicants to consider questions of diversity, inclusion, and the voices that are amplified or marginalized in different media contexts.

Applications due **November 2, 2026**.

For more information, and complete application materials go to

www.lsa.umich.edu/judaic/institute

judaicstudies@umich.edu • 734.763.9047



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The “Frankely Judaic”
podcast explores new
research in the field of
Jewish studies conducted
by fellows at the Frankel
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our website*



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