Active Learning and Public Engagement in the History Survey: Teaching with Service Learning, Wikipedia, and Podcasting in Jewish History Courses

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WHAT ARE THE LEARNING OBJECTIVES for teaching history, the outcomes we want to achieve in the classroom? In the course of the past century and more, debates have ebbed and flowed over whether the aim should be to convey content knowledge or cultivate historical thinking.[1] The prevailing long-term trend in university history instruction—especially when one considers the rise of the historical seminar in the nineteenth century and the source-method of teaching in the twentieth—has been towards teaching methods of analysis.[2] That is to say, by reading documents and sources, students can learn a way of looking at the world—to think like a historian: to constantly look for context, to examine change over time, to seek evidence and analyze it closely.[3] Still, we face three critical challenges in constructive courses and curricula. First, we must reconsider survey classes. The "facts-first" approach, the "coverage" model, and the efforts to teach "cultural literacy" still maintain a certain pedagogical inertia, manifested in how instructors usually teach individual classes and how the wider history major frameworks situate introductory classes to provide prerequisite

knowledge to allow students to delve into deeper topics in upper-division courses. Second, it is necessary to look to learning objectives beyond the individual class. History courses should certainly have aims tied to the specific subject at hand, but one can also articulate overarching student objectives—what students will take away if a course is the only university-level history class they will ever take, or, alternatively, what they will gain from a sequence of courses or a major at large. And finally, if training students to think historically is an objective of instruction in history, it must be situated in the pursuit of a higher goal and framing for the humanities in general. Just as the goal of the university should not be to produce ready worker bees for eager employers, neither should our objective be to transform every first-year student into a budding academic. Instead, when teaching historical thinking, we can encourage students to see the world through new eyes and demonstrate why history matters in a real-world context. Closely examining documents certainly contributes to this objective, though indirectly. As teachers and as scholars, we should be seeking something more. Consequently, in a series of courses in medieval and modern Jewish history taught at the University of California, Los Angeles in 2017-2018, I experimented with assignments and course structures to explore these issues and how we can look beyond coverage and achieve higher-order objectives in teaching history over a sequence of courses.

Scholars' discussions of teaching in recent decades have been informed by research in the scholarship of teaching and learning, particularly the framework put forth by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe—the pursuit of understanding by design.[4] The central principle Wiggins and McTighe propose, "backwards design," is a results-oriented approach to curricular design based around determining what students will understand, know, and be able to do, leading the instructor to develop assessment and a learning plan to achieve those goals.[5] This approach is, from a certain perspective, particularly well-suited to history instruction because historians are accustomed to looking backwards, and because of the deep roots of the pursuit of historical "understanding" within the discourse of historical practice dating back to Johann Gustav Droysen's and Wilhelm Dilthey's nineteenth-century discussions of *Verstehen* (historical understanding) as a methodology of encountering the past.[6] Examples of backwards design could include writing the

course's final exam prior to considering course readings and lecture topics and providing discrete learning objectives on the syllabus. But if we want to implement backwards design innovations in higher education with an emphasis on learning objectives, we should also consider student assignments and assessments, and whether they can be integrated into our thinking about the broader aims we wish to achieve. Why is it that we assign students a final exam or research paper as standard modes of learning assessment? And is there a way to design courses so that student outputs do not only provide a method to assess learning and understanding, but also emphasize and underscore broader learning objectives?

This article surveys the author's attempts to develop the Jewish history sequence taught at UCLA's Department of History, informed by backwards design principles in the goal of incorporating active learning and public pedagogy into courses that are too often taught as passive lecture courses. In the spring, fall, and winter quarters, I designed new courses in Jewish philosophy and ethics, medieval Jewish history, and modern Jewish history, respectively, where instead of students writing research papers, they pursued projects including service learning and community service, editing and rewriting Wikipedia articles, and producing a podcast. I must admit that at the outset, I did not plan to teach this sequence with any overarching pedagogical aim in mind, or necessarily have students pursue non-traditional projects. Indeed, the first course's focus on service learning was a component of the community grant that funded it, and had it not been for this requirement, I probably would have had students write a final exam or research paper. But it became apparent that this method presented clear advantages and opportunities to deliver a set of arguments and objectives about the utility and purpose of history that I wanted to explore further, given a degree of freedom as an adjunct professor designing a sequence with limited departmental oversight. Around the same time I was developing these courses, I also was putting together a new podcast initiative, "Jewish History Matters," which explores how and why new research and enduring debates matter in a wide social context.[7] My own research program on the history of archives also relates closely to the question of how the public engages with history and why, in that case, historical objects and materials matter and have great symbolic and practical value. In this context, it became clear that there was an opportunity not just to

teach students about the subject matter of the courses I was assigned, but also to model the pedagogy of engaged historical thinking as skill-building through these three projects—service learning, Wikipedia writing, and podcasting—designed around rigorous research, writing activities, and assessment.

Research papers do constitute project-based and active learning, and I am not advocating removing the research paper entirely. However, it is important to consider the learning objectives achieved by assignments and projects. Writing a paper is a fine way for students to explore a particular question or topic in depth, offering an avenue for students to direct their own learning and connect a course to their wider interests. And it can help them hone research and writing skills. But to what end? Paper-writing does little to prepare students for the form of research and writing they might undertake in a professional career outside academia. With this in mind, scholars have long advocated a variety of ways to teach history that entices student interest and shakes up the classroom environment—flipped classrooms, service learning, simulations, and digital projects, to name just a few.[8] But the research paper still reigns supreme as the standard assignment for the history class and beyond, maintaining a kind of pedagogical inertia that calls on us to consider what we gain by teaching with this method and what it contributes to our mission as teachers and scholars. Consequently, when designing these courses, I tried to integrate thinking about history in public into courses that are usually constrained by an effort to achieve "coverage," allowing us to rethink how we teach history and the humanities at large, while also considering the role of Jewish history and other similar fields as something that can contribute to students' broad historical understanding.

A Jewish History Sequence: Context and Challenges

The Jewish studies sequence, as taught at UCLA and other American universities with concentrations or programs in Jewish history or Jewish studies, is usually constituted as a survey of the history, culture, and religion of the Jews from ancient times to the present. Given the diversity of Jews and the interdisciplinary nature of Jewish studies, introductory courses present different emphases depending on the institutional context in which Jewish studies is situated, whether in religion, history, or elsewhere. Some

universities offer a single introductory course or two-semester sequence, often divided chronologically at points of rupture, such as the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. At UCLA, the curriculum was once structured as a four-course sequence of Jewish history in ancient, medieval, early modern, and modern times, taught over a two-year period. In 2017, the undergraduate offerings for the Department of History's Jewish field were revised to restructure the survey as three courses (ancient, medieval, and modern). Though these courses are listed at UCLA as upper-division courses, for practical purposes, they represent an introduction—though certainly a detailed one—to Jewish studies.

In 2017-2018, I developed new courses for the Jewish history sequence in medieval and modern Jewish history (M182B and M182C), as well as a class on Jewish thought (M181SL). The medieval class traced Jewish history from about 500 C.E. to 1650 as a global history in Europe, the Islamic world, and then in the early modern period in the Americas, which enables us to think critically about the nature of diverse societies in this period and the fate of minorities in a range of political, religious, and social environments. This course was structured around the rise of Rabbinic Judaism in late antiquity before turning to the shifting centers of Jewish life in Muslim Spain, North Africa, and Christian lands, and the Jews' expulsion, resettlement, and mass migration in the late medieval period that set the table for developments in Jewish life and culture in early modern times.

The modern Jewish history course engaged with the transformations in Jewish life from the eighteenth century to the present day in the shadow of the rise of the modern centralized state, nationalism, and twentieth-century genocide. Rather than trace the histories of various centers of Jewish life, which was the structure of the medieval class, this course took a thematic approach to thinking about the dual transformations of Jewish life in religious and cultural terms, with a twin crisis of rabbinic authority as well as the shift of Jews from margin to mainstream. The course considered the place of Jews in the Enlightenment, Emancipation, and the rise of religious and political movements, with a particular emphasis on the contexts of the United States, eastern Europe, and the modern state of Israel.

Alongside this Jewish history sequence, UCLA's Alan D. Leve Center for Jewish Studies invited me to develop a course as part of

a service learning curriculum supported by grants from the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles.[9] The Leve Center's service learning initiative originated in 2008 with a Mellon Foundation grant for a program on the role of the Holocaust in American culture. From 2014 to 2018, the Center inaugurated a formal service learning program in partnership with UCLA's Center for Community Learning (which coordinates a minor in "civic engagement") and the Jewish Federation (whose grant-funding supported courses on a range of topics including Persian Jewish life, the history of Jews in Los Angeles, Holocaust testimony, the history of antisemitism, and Russian Jewish literature). Several of these courses examined the Los Angeles Jewish community and have had digital components. When I was presented with the opportunity to develop a service learning course within this framework, I created "Jewish Thought, Politics, and Ethics: From Theory to Practice," which surveyed Jewish intellectual history from ancient Alexandria to modern-day America, with an emphasis on modern Jewish thought. The course was structured to allow students to study a range of thinkers—from the first-century Philo of Alexandria, to the rabbi and civil rights activist Abraham Joshua Heschel, to Benedict Spinoza and Martin Buber— as well as interact with local figures who were guest lecturers. By reading and engaging with political and philosophical traditions and debates about diasporic existence, antisemitism, Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism), *tikkun olam* (a mystical framework in recent decades used as a general approach for social justice), Jewish continuity and contemporary theology, and more, we tried to understand what constituted a Jewish intellectual tradition and how it relates to the wider world. Further, the service learning component drove a key learning objective—for students to connect the history of Jewish thought to actual developments in the contemporary world.

On face value, these kinds of survey courses—whether on Jewish history at large or intellectual history more specifically—tend to be structured around a canon of historical thinkers, writers, and movements, or try to survey an immense and global field in the course of a brief quarter or semester. However, a consideration of how to revise such courses should be informed both by the debate about moving away from "coverage" and by the wider historical and historiographical context in which the courses are rooted. That is to say, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a sequence of

Jewish scholars pursued monumental histories of the Jews, ranging from Isaac Marcus Jost's nine-volume *Geschichte der Israeliten* (1820-1828) and Heinrich Graetz's *Geschichte der Juden* (1853-1875), to Simon Dubnow's *Weltgeschichte des jüdischen Volkes* (1925-1929) and Salo Baron's *Social and Religious History of the Jews* (1937 and 1952-1983). Today, few would attempt to write a monumental, singular history of the Jews, and indeed Baron's attempt at a second and expanded edition of his history was never completed. Similarly, scholars recognize that there is not a singular history of the Jews, but there are instead *many* histories, and some even have called for a reconsideration of what constitutes "Jewish history" or how we identify Jews in history to begin with.[10] Nevertheless, the conception of Jewish history as a unitary field of study remains embedded in the traditional manner of teaching a Jewish history survey, and many instructors still rely on some of the assumptions and frameworks of the older master narratives—for instance, Dubnow's notion of shifting centers of Jewish culture or Graetz's focus on German Jewry—when trying to teach the grand sweep of Jewish history at the undergraduate level. The very structure of a survey course or sequence necessitates a linear narrative, and even if we try to emphasize the multitude of histories, the project of preparing and presenting a survey course constitutes another kind of inescapably monumental history, this time in the form of an introductory course. Likewise, even as research uncovers new and diverse aspects of Jewish cultural and intellectual history, for instance, if one considers previously ignored or underappreciated thinkers or new reconfigurations of notions of the geography of Jewish history that spotlight Jews in the Middle East and North Africa, there is still only a limited time frame in a semester (much less a quarter) to add material to the existing foundational narratives of Jewish history. This is ultimately unsustainable and such "coverage" approaches and the challenges they represent need to be addressed.

Faced with such challenges, as well as the need to fulfill a basic curricular role that these classes played in terms of pre-existing course frameworks and departmental field requirements, I considered strategies to stress key learning objectives. Considering also that I had a great deal of freedom in designing my courses, I still wanted students to come away with a kind of cultural literacy and familiarity with Jewish history and its role in the wider world, and wanted to strengthen their skills in historical thinking, but I certainly did not

want to just cover major topics. With that said, I did not want to entirely throw out the traditional frameworks, but instead innovate and experiment on top of them—for instance, I still had a final exam for the medieval and modern courses, but also integrated active learning projects into the course. Consequently, I pursued a two-pronged approach: First, I structured the classes around arguments rather than information. In lectures and discussions, I would present central arguments about Jewish history in particular and about history more generally, which would serve as a point of departure for students to engage with the topics and think about the world at large. For the Jewish thought and politics class, I wanted to stress that intellectual history and philosophy are not merely academic activities, but have a real-world impact, and that people in our contemporary context may not necessarily be deeply aware of these thinkers and writers despite their work often being implicitly informed by historical discussions and debates. The medieval history class was structured around two critical arguments: (1) that in order to understand the modern world, we must comprehend the middle ages (and in order to properly learn about the middle ages, we need to look at the position of the Jews) and (2) that medieval history could be presented as a global history, with Jews providing a useful point of comparison between the histories of Islamic societies and Christian Europe. The modern Jewish history class was rooted in a critical argument about the transformation of the world since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with the public construction of historical narratives and other forms of knowledge being important forces shaping the world in which people have lived. Second, I also wanted to achieve two interconnected overarching learning objectives for these courses, so that students would achieve a greater and more complex understanding of the role of minorities in history, with the Jews presenting an important case study, though certainly not the only one. Simultaneously, I wanted students to comprehend the importance of this history beyond the classroom, so that they could gain intellectual tools to think about why history matters in our world today: that historical frameworks are useful for thinking about how we got to where we are and where we might go, and that mythologized and popularized visions of the past have been, and remain, powerful social forces.

To complement the argument-based approach and the idea that history can and should be applied beyond the classroom, I wanted to

design assignments and projects that would highlight active learning rather than passive absorption of information, prompting students to reformulate their growing knowledge in new ways. Altogether, the concept was to develop the courses so that students would gain both transferrable skills and transferrable ideas that would allow them to think about the world with historical context—this is the fundamental idea that Jewish history, as a field, presents a case study allowing students and scholars to draw ideas applicable to a range of histories and contexts.

Designing Active Learning Assignments for a Survey Course

In this context, and with these aims in mind, I designed appropriate assignments and frameworks for student work in each course that would provide a scaffolding for the greater learning objectives rather than just assess content knowledge.

Service Learning via "Jewish Thought, Politics, and Ethics" (M181SL)

In "Jewish Thought, Politics, and Ethics," students volunteered with organizations in Los Angeles as part of the service learning requirement of the course. We worked to offer appropriate service opportunities with groups, including Beit T'shuvah, a Jewish rehabilitation center and residential addiction treatment center; Bet Tzedek, a non-profit law firm that provides legal aid to low-income individuals; Facing History and Ourselves, a professional development program aiding history educators; the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust (now the Holocaust Museum LA); and others. In the course of the ten-week quarter, students were expected to complete at least twenty volunteer hours, and they were encouraged to pursue joint projects as a group at their service partner. Student service projects included participating in the service sites' projects and activities, such as assisting in processing archival materials, serving as a museum guide, meeting with program participants, and more.

Due to the time requirements of the service component, the course was designed to reduce the amount of student reading to a certain extent. Class sessions remained focused on close readings of texts and secondary sources, but discussions were structured to complement the historical readings with why they have been

relevant in historical context and in the present. For instance, when reading the twelfth-century Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides' take on the nature of charity, or Martin Buber's *I and Thou* (1923), the question was not just how these ideas developed within Jewish intellectual and philosophical traditions, but also how they have percolated into the missions and tasks of people in the present day. I encouraged students to tie the work of the groups with which they were volunteering to broader theoretical discussions about why it was that institutions and initiatives, for instance, felt the need to pursue one aim or another. To achieve this goal, I designed a short paper assignment where students analyzed the mission statement of the group they were working with as a historical document and considered how it related to historical themes we engaged in the class. The assignment was designed so students could practice close reading skills and apply the tools of analysis we would use to study a historical document to also study the present. In addition, I dedicated the course's final week to student presentations in which they shared their service learning experience and how it related to themes we discussed in class. Students also wrote an eight- to ten-page reflection paper summarizing the service learning project and demonstrating how historical ideas, figures, and works make their way from theory to practice in the twenty-first century.

Wikipedia Editing via "Medieval Jewish History" (M182B)

In "Medieval Jewish History," instead of asking students to write a term paper, they were tasked with editing and rewriting a Wikipedia article of their choice on the basis of secondary research. Students were provided with a list of articles related to the course subjects and were asked to pick one (or find a similar article) that they would analyze against secondary scholarship. On the basis of their research and learning in class, they then would significantly rewrite or expand the article to contribute to broader public knowledge of the middle ages and Jewish history. For longer articles, students picked a subsection within a Wikipedia entry where they would focus their efforts. Through this assignment, students looked closely at topics including blood libel accusations, the eleventh-century exegete Rashi, the 1492 decree expelling Jews from Spain, and others. As the instructor, I tied the assignment into the course as an exercise

in thinking about how public knowledge about the past is produced and propagated, inasmuch as medieval history is one area that is often popularly portrayed in an inaccurate fashion and given that much of the history of the Jews was tied to misinformation like false myths of blood libels or deicide. As the final project, students turned in the article with their edits (using their word processor's "track changes" function to indicate their revisions), uploaded it to Wikipedia, and wrote a brief paper outlining the problems with the pre-existing article and why they felt it was important to make the changes and additions that they did.

To facilitate students' success in this project, I dedicated class time to discussing the history of Wikipedia, its role in society, and the process of writing Wikipedia articles. As such, students read a selection of the scholarly literature on the history of encyclopedias and Wikipedia in particular, leading us into a discussion of the difference between encyclopedic writing and other kinds of scholarly writing. Further, we looked closely at a number of articles that students had selected so we could discuss the critiques they had and how they could better represent the history of the Jews and the broader historical context in general. We took a critical approach to Wikipedia's policies and how the proclamation of "neutrality," for instance, hides implicit biases. On the basis of this inquiry, students spoke both about how Wikipedia is used in everyday life and its flaws as a scholarly resource—but also how it has the possibility to be improved if edited with an eye towards historical accuracy and big-picture issues based on research. The project allowed for a discussion of the nature of research, the distinctions between scholarly research that is often inaccessible to the public (whether due to paywalls or academic jargon), and how new research and approaches can be used to revise wider narratives about the past. On the whole, it led to a productive set of conversations about the nature of scholarly and public knowledge, both in the context of medieval Jewish history and the present.

Podcasting via "Modern Jewish History" (M182C)

Finally, in "Modern Jewish History," students worked in small groups of two or three to write, record, and produce podcast episodes ranging from twenty to thirty minutes long on topics that

related to the course and its themes. Similar to a research paper, the assignment allowed students to explore topics of interest, but in this context, students' output was distinct in its auditory format. Other critical objectives were for students to cultivate research, writing, and communication skills in a medium other than the written word, and to develop concision and clarity to transfer detailed knowledge to an audience of non-experts.

Like the Wikipedia assignment, I offered a series of potential topics and tried to help students pair up into working groups. We also dedicated class time to training, and worked closely with an on-campus media production studio where students were able to utilize equipment and computer resources for producing their podcast episode. Students were asked to meet with the instructor to discuss the topics they were engaging and, similar to a research paper project, they were required to produce an annotated bibliography relating to their topic. Further, they were asked to listen to and critique an existing history podcast to allow them to see what is being done in the field and help them think critically about podcasting and the genre of educational and history podcasts in particular. Students were asked to draft a "script" or detailed outline to assist them in the recording process—which could also be assessed by the instructor as a kind of draft—and one student even used music clips and sound effects to tell their story. In the end, students recorded their episodes, did a rough cut edit, and produced a short introduction to the topic that could be the equivalent to the "show notes" attached to a podcast episode. Each student also wrote a short reflection paper about the topic and the episode in order to go into more detail on what they learned about, and why they did what they did in the podcast episode. Also, with the support of a teaching mini-grant from UCLA's Office of Instructional Development, we were able to hire the services of a professional audio editor to mix and master the students' episodes. With the students' permission, some episodes were posted as part of a podcast that is available to the public.

Themes and Learning Objectives

Each project was designed with specific learning objectives in mind, closely tied to the broader themes of the courses and with the aim of amplifying the course's arguments. In the "Jewish Thought"

course, the service learning project was intended to allow students to see how ideas move from theory to practice. As for the "Medieval Jewish History" course, the Wikipedia editing project cultivated students' self-editing skills—which represents a critical component of writing—along with a real-world experience of editing others' work. A further learning objective was for students to critically assess the nature of Wikipedia and the promulgation of historical information and narratives on the Internet, to help them think through the question of how average people, who do not study history at the university level, glean historical data that informs their lives and worldviews. The "Modern Jewish History" course's podcasting project had a similar objective to get students to consider the avenues through which history is presented to the public, as a means to gain familiarity with a new aural toolkit for communication.

   In certain ways, the latter two projects were not entirely different from writing a research paper, which is also an active learning project that obviously includes research and writing components. However, all three projects were specifically geared to issues of public engagement. Students could do projects that connected their learning with the wider world, whether through tying historical subjects to present-day practice, or producing some kind of public knowledge. Further, in all these cases, students were asked to do some kind of research and writing that would allow them to think critically about their projects and produce an output that could be assessed. These assignments were also designed with the express purpose of overcoming specific challenges posed by these classes as they are traditionally taught. Classes in intellectual history and philosophy are often focused on theoretical subjects, and I wanted to develop classes that could help students make the real-world connection between intellectual history and the outside world. Likewise, survey classes too often represent a kind of passive learning with limited long-term learning. While research paper assignments (particularly in writing-intensive courses) can aid in the development of writing skills, most papers written for history classes live and die within the span of a semester or quarter, and subsequently sit undisturbed on students' and professors' hard drives. By contrast, the hope with these projects was to help students produce something that they could utilize beyond the immediate course, adding skills, activities, and deliverables to their growing resumes.

These projects draw upon a growing literature on the utility of active learning projects like service learning and the possibilities to use Wikipedia and podcasting in the classroom.[11] However, I also wanted to integrate such projects into the courses in a way to lend gravity to the specific arguments I wanted to make when teaching the materials. My hope was that these kinds of assignments would not just assess student knowledge and abilities, but also serve to accelerate these ideas and strike a chord for students as they learned about historical examples and actually put the issues into practice in their own work. Furthermore, the structural concepts behind each course and its project were tied to specific learning objectives to how we engage with the question of history in the public square. For instance, the "Jewish Thought" course was driven by the central concept that intellectual history has a close relationship to real-world political and social developments, with philosophical concepts and ideas rooted in history finding continual expression in public life or institutional forms, even if they are unknown by the people who put them into practice. Not only did the service learning projects allow students to consider this assertion, the course simultaneously helped students gain work experience through an internship or volunteer opportunity that they could connect with their own aspirations and interests. For the "Medieval Jewish History" course, editing Wikipedia articles was tied into an elemental question about how average people access (and have accessed) information and knowledge (or propaganda) about the past. Clearly, the modern world is far different from medieval Christian Europe, Islamic Spain, or elsewhere, but the assignment was structured in order to get students to think about this fundamental question of a globalized world, access to information, and popular knowledge. Meanwhile, the course emphasized editing skills and the challenge of editing someone else's work, which is an important aspect of writing that is not addressed when students are asked to do writing projects on an individual basis. And, finally, the "Modern Jewish History" course was rooted in a critical argument about the transformation of the world since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with the public construction of historical narratives and other forms of knowledge being important forces shaping the world in which people have lived. As a result, the podcasting project was helpful for students to think through the power of media and public perception of the

past, particularly regarding the role that history and educational podcasts play in promulgating historical information. Meanwhile, they gained a set of skills in editing and producing audio in addition to public speaking experience. Further, if one learning objective of studying the past is to be conversant in a series of historical issues, the podcast was quite literally a conversation between students that demonstrated their fluency in engaging with questions of the past and their relationship to wider issues.

In addition, each assignment asked the students to engage with a particular public community, sometimes with the result of helping them rethink the nature of this public in critical perspective. In the case of service learning, students engaged with the question of the purpose and outcome of Jewish studies at the university. We had to seriously discuss the challenging question that if we pursue service learning in Jewish studies, then Jewish studies is in the service of whom, exactly? In all of these classes, as is the case generally, most students were not themselves Jewish.[12] Nevertheless, the class was grant-funded by a Los Angeles Jewish community institution, and many of the service partners were in some way related to the organized Jewish community. The project thus laid bare to students some of the challenges of teaching Jewish studies and Jewish history in general, causing us to critically appraise the issue of, for instance, what makes a Jewish-funded (and Jewish-named) legal aid group primarily serving non-Jewish clients particularly "Jewish." Similarly, we looked critically at who the editors of Wikipedia are and how their implicit biases and perspectives are promulgated to a wide range of readers, leading to the spread of both information and misconceptions about the past and present. And in the case of the podcasting project, students were asked to think critically about the nature of audio and the podcasting medium—in the traditional college course, the focus is on reading and writing, so we thought deeply about how the medium affects the message, and how we can "write" and read history using audio.

Challenges and Opportunities

Overall, students responded positively to the courses and their specifically tailored assignments. Students welcomed opportunities for public engagement and were excited about the possibility to

produce something that would be read or listened to by others. Further, some students were very vocal about their interest in projects that were off the beaten path—not just because they could avoid writing a final exam or term paper, but out of genuine interest in doing something they had not done before and expanding their skills and horizons. However, planning and managing these student assignments and projects did pose a number of challenges. First of all, they required intensive instructor involvement, including meeting with students repeatedly, helping set up students into groups, and so on. If students are to produce work that is circulated outside the university (such as a podcast episode, articles on Wikipedia, or service in the wider community), then they become representatives of the university, the instructor, and the quality of learning. Instructors should always want their students to succeed, but such projects call on the professor to take a greater interest in ensuring that students produce work that can be of value to the wider world. Additionally, on a fundamental level, students were being asked to not just master a set of historical materials and concepts, but also to acquire new skills—which occupied valuable class time, especially given the constraints of a ten-week quarter. What is more, group work is a constant challenge, and on a handful of occasions, I was required to help mediate if there were interpersonal conflicts or if students had vastly differing views on how to pursue their projects.

Assessment also presented a universal challenge. Most instructors can easily determine what constitutes an "A" paper in their institutional context, but grading non-written and group work is more problematic. One solution I pursued was to include ancillary written work as part of each project, which would then create a "portfolio" surrounding the overarching assignment. It was necessary to construct strong, detailed rubrics that concretized and clearly explained the instructor's expectations (see **Appendix A** and **Appendix B** for the service learning assignment and rubric, **Appendix C** and **Appendix D** for the Wikipedia assignment and rubric, and **Appendix E** and **Appendix F** for the podcast assignment and rubric). Again, this is not particularly different from designing assessment based on writing a research paper or other assignment, inasmuch as a rubric communicates expectations and methods for grading. Here, it was especially useful as one way to structure the assignment and tie it to learning outcomes. For each project,

the rubric was designed to break down the assignment into a set of aspects, delineating what was expected for each section. For instance, for the Wikipedia project, sections included selecting an appropriate article relevant to the course that could be improved with edits; making substantial edits that provide value to a reader seeking encyclopedic knowledge; making edits that improve clarity and style; researching secondary sources (including course readings) that provide detailed background and verifiable information according to Wikipedia's standards; and composing an accompanying brief paper that situates the work on the project within the themes and context of the course. For the podcasting project, I similarly broke down the assignment into selecting an episode topic and format relevant to the course themes; creating the content and writing for the episode so it is well-organized and clear, includes analysis of major themes and sources, and articulates an argument or debate (and why it matters); researching secondary sources to plan the episode; preparing detailed "show notes" that summarize the episode, link to relevant articles and sources, and contain a bibliography; and composing an accompanying paper that contextualizes and justifies their project.

Service Learning Project Challenges

These kinds of projects also present other challenges. For the service learning course, it was clear from the outset that the service component must be integrated into the class in a manner that was accessible to all students regardless of their background. As Dan Butin and Noam Pianko have suggested, service learning has deep ties to Jewish education—within the university and beyond—yet also poses particular problems as it relates to the tension between the academic objective to cultivate critical perspectives and the seeming aim of some Jewish community sponsors and organizations to foster Jewish self-identity among students, especially in light of the fact that most students are non-Jews.[13] As Butin and Pianko indicate, educational institutions and programs within the Jewish community have long had service components, whether one looks to the American Jewish World Service's initiatives that send young Jews to volunteer in developing countries or service projects in the state of Israel. These efforts are directed plainly at using the

value of service to underscore "Jewish values" and to direct Jewish participants toward the strengthening of their ethnic, religious, and group self-identification. All of this raises serious questions about the utility and appropriateness of service learning to the university-level Jewish studies curriculum, which further highlights the fundamental tension within Jewish studies: the aim of university-level instruction is to cultivate critical perspectives, but many funding groups or individuals with ties to Jewish communal life have a main motive of fostering communal identity on college campuses. Further, as mentioned, most students taking Jewish studies courses are not Jewish. Consequently, the story of service learning at the university level and in Jewish studies in particular focuses on serious issues about what the purpose and outcome is for of Jewish studies at large, bringing forward the issue of the relationship between Jewish studies and the Jewish communal institutions and philanthropists that often underwrite such programs.

To mitigate these issues, I foregrounded these questions and concerns at the beginning of the service learning course with a transparent discussion of how the class came to be, the need for it to be accessible to all students, and how it could be used as a learning opportunity about the tensions between funders and missions (which also comes out in many institutional settings). We also discussed "applied Jewish studies" to think about an intellectual toolkit for the role of Jewish studies in the wider world.[14] Further, we specifically tried to find partner groups that deal with Jewish issues, but are not part of the Jewish community directly or deal with issues outside of the Jewish community (such as Jewish World Watch, which is dedicated to preventing genocide, or Bet Tzedek, which has clients who are mostly not Jewish). This allowed us to think critically about what makes any of these groups "Jewish." For instance, we could look at a figure like Benedict Spinoza, whose "Jewishness" has been a subject of much debate—whether we look at his excommunication from the Amsterdam Jewish community or the nature and content of his philosophical systems and approaches. Just the same, we used the study of contemporary Jewish thought to situate it within a wider context to help students engage with complex questions about the relationship of modern Jews, and their institutions and service oriented initiatives, with the world around them.

Wikipedia Project Challenges

For the Wikipedia project, one challenge for students aiming to improve existing articles is that many are poorly written precisely because of Wikipedia's editorial standards and epistemological assumptions (not necessarily due to the failures of prior contributors). Students were tasked with revising articles to improve them, but they faced the same structural restrictions that limit how articles are composed. Articles are written by a series of authors, leading to inconsistent style. Further, Wikipedia's standards of "verifiability," "neutral point of view," and "no original research" preclude any serious reflection on primary sources.[15] In fact, some of the most controversial pages are edited and re-edited, with historically accurate information removed. Beyond these structural issues that impact Wikipedia articles on an individual level, the entire system is also designed to disadvantage female writers.[16] Additional challenges resulted from the fact that, thankfully, students have been successfully taught over the years that Wikipedia is an unreliable source. Consequently, this inspired a teachable moment to bring the students to consider whether it might actually be possible that Wikipedia could *become* reliable. We read about the history of Wikipedia and discussed how and why the various policies came into place, and whether it would be possible to base articles on academic research rather than popular articles. Yet another challenge was dedicating class time to teach students how to edit Wikipedia on a technical level. We spent about three hours of class time just on the question of orientation and technical issues, as we demonstrated how one signs up for Wikipedia, how one uses the specific markup language and online editing tools, how one adds citations, and so on.

In addition to these general challenges, Jewish studies topics on Wikipedia pose another challenge in particular: many of the articles began as "stubs" imported from *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, a twelve-volume project produced by Funk and Wagnalls between 1901 and 1906 under the editorial direction of Isidore Singer. As the encyclopedia entered the public domain, Wikipedia editors imported its articles to serve as a foundation for many Jewish topics. However, these articles are quite outdated, so I encouraged

students to look at other excellent encyclopedias like *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe* and *Encyclopaedia Judaica* in preparation for their new roles as editors themselves.

Podcasting Project Challenges

The podcasting project presented specific technical challenges as well as pedagogical ones. In contrast to the Wikipedia assignment, which was primarily a written assignment, the podcast required students to learn the basics of working with audio—from recording, to editing, to production. We thus dedicated class time to introduction sessions at UCLA's on-campus studio space, and I drew upon my experience producing a podcast to emphasize critical components of audio. Without my personal experience in podcasting, it is likely I would have been unable to equip students to pursue this project effectively. Such a project could perhaps be better suited for a course that focuses on the place of audio in society, or is taught in collaboration with a radio, television, and film department with a focus on learning audio skills. With a semester as opposed to quarter, the project could be much more productive, allowing students more time to not only select their topics, but also master the skills prior to producing the podcast. It is challenging enough for an undergraduate to write an excellent paper, despite that students (ideally) have been developing their writing skills over the course of many years throughout their secondary and university education. To write and produce an audio piece requires an additional set of skills that most students have never had an opportunity to cultivate: basic technical knowledge of audio and recording, microphone technique, basic content editing, and more. Preparing an audio piece is not dissimilar to writing an essay, but it exists in a medium that is even more difficult to edit and outline than the written word. It is not impossible for students to excel in this medium, but we must set our expectations accordingly. At the same time, the project still provides an opportunity for students to realize that the kind of writing that they are being taught to do in humanities courses is not just applicable to research papers, but can also be applied to organizing their thoughts and communicating a message in a variety of media.

In retrospect, the podcasting project was an excellent experiment, but would have benefited from additional preparation. First, it would

be useful to more aggressively cross-list such a course and even co-teach it with an instructor who can work directly with the students on the audio component. Second, it could be useful to reframe the podcast assignment as an overall class project, where the students would pick one particular theme to explore over the course of a cohesive podcast miniseries, with each group of students taking on an individual sub-topic. This would achieve a number of objectives, including sparking a conversation among students about what is really at stake in the course topic and getting them to think about how they might translate what they are learning to a broader audience. On the basis of such discussions, the instructor could help to develop an outline of predetermined topics and episodes that students could sign up for, leading towards a more cohesive final product. Finally, one opportunity we did not pursue in this iteration of the project was collaborating with other scholars and experts in the field. Students indeed had their own conversations about the topic on the basis of class readings, discussions, and outside research, but they could have also interacted with other scholars and done interviews to allow them to "quote" from other scholars beyond their articles or books. While this could be beneficial, it is also time-consuming for other scholars and is outside the purview of their own teaching and work expectations. However, an instructor could collaborate with willing colleagues to serve as resources that students could talk to, or interview as guests on their podcasts.

Reflection

Altogether, one might look to the general challenges these assignments present. First, they all placed non-expert students and their work in the public sphere. If a challenge of Wikipedia, for instance, is that it is often misleading because it is written by non-experts, then what is the benefit of bringing undergraduates into this field? I would argue that, although the students are non-professional writers (much like most of Wikipedia's contributors), they are specifically pursuing training within the historical discipline. On the question of sustainability, while such active learning projects require an instructor to take an active role in guiding students, ideally, an instructor in any teaching situation would take the effort needed to help students produce the best work possible. As with any course, my

time demands were mitigated by a smaller class size. With courses of fifty students or more, while a teaching assistant or grader would provide some assistance, in such situations, it might be useful to have these kinds of active learning assignments available as an alternate assignment for students who want to take the initiative, rather than making them a course requirement.

As we have seen, there are clear downsides. These kinds of student projects take a great deal of self-investment and effort from the instructor. Assigning a term paper is relatively easy, from the instructor's perspective, as it is a kind of pre-packaged assignment. Here, the professor must develop a new set of assignments and signposts throughout the term, and teach a new set of intellectual tools and skills that take away from class time that otherwise would be devoted to the subject matter of the course itself. These kinds of assignments also benefit from institutional support, like a center for community learning, library resources, and funding and mini-grants that would allow bringing in outside experts. One might even argue that these kinds of courses *require* such support, as these resources add to the ability of time-strapped faculty to teach subjects that may be outside their core area of expertise. This, too, requires faculty investment of time to coordinate and operate such collaboration. Still, these kinds of assignments help to structure survey courses in a way that ties in specific learning objectives beyond the basics of "coverage." In doing so, they provide a series of potential benefits, helping students to explore history in new ways and think about history beyond the classroom. These and other similar assignments can help to sharpen the learning objectives for the class, providing a crucial benefit. The assignments become, in effect, not just a way to assess student learning, but also to underscore the topic itself. What is more, they allow for the construction of new learning objectives that transcend the specific topic of the course, leading towards new kinds of arguments for courses about the utility of history in general.

In retrospect, the Jewish history course sequence I taught using these techniques was a proof of concept demonstrating the utility of these methods and approaches as they might apply to teaching survey courses. They are not the only such possible assignments; one could assign students to write an op-ed piece or produce short videos on a topic related to the course. Altogether, it is critical today that we think about the historical curriculum through a range of learning

objectives that students can achieve in the course of a ten-week quarter or fifteen-week semester. If we want to move beyond the "coverage" model, then reframing core courses to be about the world around us is one possibility for making history classes engaging and interesting to a wide range of students, equipping them to go out into the world with historical perspective. In this manner, it is critical for us to think beyond the learning objectives of any one particular class and consider how they fit into the wider objectives of a history major curriculum (or the liberal arts and general education components of a student's education). If our classes are driven by theses, arguments, and learning objectives about history's critical engagement with the world, we have a great possibility to contribute to the way in which students think about the world in which they live—these kinds of active learning and public engagement projects present one avenue to pursue these goals.

Notes

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Appendix A

Outline and Objectives of the Service Learning Paper
Analyzing an Organization's Mission Statement

As a short writing assignment, you will write a brief paper (about three pages) that analyzes and reflects on the mission statement of your partner organization. The paper should demonstrate how we connect our knowledge of the past with the study of the present. As a result, you should aim to gain further perspective on the broader context of the work that your service partner organization does, and how your project fits into it. You may also compare the present version of the organization's website with older versions using the Internet Archive (https://www.archive.org).

Learning Objectives

- Students will learn to look at a contemporary document using similar analytic tools that a historian uses when studying the past.
- Students will exercise research skills in searching for a particular kind of document. If the mission statement is not found online, the student will identify it by searching in the organization's printed materials.
- Students will learn to analyze a website as a historical document (and potentially compare different versions of a mission statement as it changes over time, as documented by the Internet Archive).
- Students will develop skills in using the historical viewpoints we are studying in class to understand present-day activities.
- Students will gain perspective on how historical ideas can percolate and penetrate through society, even if their origins and histories are sometimes unacknowledged by those who put them into practice.

Project Details

- Locate the mission statement in the group's website or printed materials. It may be under a specific heading or page titled "mission statement," but the mission statement sometimes is not explicitly formulated publicly—in which case you may need to extract the mission from other materials like a strategic plan or the group's general description and history.
- If available, copy and paste the mission statement into your paper (as it is a primary document you will be analyzing).
- Identify figures or ideas we are exploring in class that have a relationship or influence on the organization's mission and perspective.
- Write a brief paper (about three pages) that (a) analyzes and reflects on the mission statement of your organization in historical context and (b) uses the mission statement to contextualize the work you are doing at the service partner organization.
- You may also include interviews or discussions with your partner organization's leaders, employees, or board members as part of this paper.

Appendix B

Rubric for the Service Learning Paper
Analyzing an Organization's Mission Statement

	Identifying the Mission Statement	Analyzing the Mission Statement	Researching Sources	Writing the Paper
A	Student has identified the mission statement of the partner organization and isolated it from other materials (e.g., the group's history). If necessary, the student has identified a mission in ancillary materials or by asking for an internal document from the organization itself.	Student has offered substantial, thoughtful, and detailed analysis of the mission statement, treating it as a primary source. The student has effectively connected the document to broader issues we are discussing in class and is able to treat it as if it is a historical source, in a manner that informs their service learning activities.	Student has conducted sufficient research to identify the mission statement, as well as researched other relevant sources that highlight how this mission is put into practice by the organization. The student has drawn directly from sources and materials discussed in class to inform their own analysis and discussion.	The paper has a clear thesis and is written effectively and with concision. The paper moves from close reading and analysis of the mission statement to broad discussion of course issues in a way that demonstrates excellent communication skills. The paper is about three pages in length.
B	Student has not identified a mission statement, but has tried to identify the overall activities of the group. The student has inferred the group's mission, but not by using a primary source.	Student has offered thoughtful analysis of the mission statement, treating it as a primary source. The student has tied the document to broader issues we are discussing in class, but in a limited fashion.	Student has conducted some research to identify the mission statement. The student has drawn indirectly from sources and materials discussed in class to inform their own analysis and discussion.	The paper has a thesis that is vague or buried. The thesis may be at the end of the paper. The paper demonstrates good communication skills, but grammatical or spelling errors take away from an otherwise excellent paper.
C	Student has misidentified the mission statement and instead identified something else that is clearly not the actual mission of the group.	Student has offered brief analysis of the mission statement. The student has not demonstrated an awareness of the document as a primary source.	Student has conducted limited research to identify the group's mission. The student has not drawn from sources and materials discussed in class, instead referring to general concepts and ideas.	The paper does not have a clear thesis. The paper is not well written.
D	Student has not identified a general mission or specific mission statement.	Student has not effectively analyzed the mission statement or has severely misinterpreted it.	The student has not drawn from sources and materials discussed in class to inform their analysis.	The paper lacks a thesis entirely. The paper is poorly written.

Appendix C

Outline and Objectives of the Wikipedia Project

As a short writing assignment, you will select an existing Wikipedia article (or a section of longer article) relating to a figure or topic from the course, which you will then edit and improve based on class lectures, class readings, and limited outside research. In addition, you will submit a brief two-page reflective essay explaining what changes you made to the Wikipedia article and why. It is acceptable for you to work with other classmates on a longer article if you each focus on one section of the article.

Learning Objectives

- Students will delve into an aspect of the course they personally find to be interesting.
- Students will consider what it means to edit another person's writing, and how their own writing skills can be applied to improving an existing piece rather than writing something from scratch.
- Students will develop and exercise writing skills of concision and clarity in order to transfer detailed knowledge to a public audience of non-experts.
- Students will gain research skills in identifying secondary sources and translating that knowledge for general consumption.
- Students will gain perspective on how historical knowledge and information (as well as misinformation) is promulgated through the Internet.

Project Details

- Read through the Wikipedia guidelines for making citations and making the changes to the website.
- Copy and paste the existing Wikipedia article into Microsoft Word (or your preferred word processor) and make your edits while using the "track changes" function—you will submit this document so the instructor will be able to identify the areas you changed.
- Submit your edited article to Wikipedia.
- Write a two-page reflective essay explaining why you made the changes that you did, including what was problematic about the old article, where you got your material from, and how the new article better illuminates the subject.

Successful completion includes:

- Selecting an appropriate article or article section. **(Week 4)**
- Annotating the article and its sources, and identifying areas for improvement. **(Week 6)**
- Submitting a rough draft of the edited article to the instructor. **(Week 8)**
- Submitting a final draft to the instructor and submitting the edited article to Wikipedia. **(Friday of Week 9)**

Appendix D

Rubric for the Wikipedia Project

	Selecting an Article	Making Substantive Article Edits	Copy Editing and Writing	Researching Sources	Writing the Brief Paper
A	Student has selected an article that is directly relevant to the course, which the student can effectively improve with edits.	Student has added substantial, relevant information to the article that will provide value to a reader seeking general encyclopedic knowledge. The student highlights important themes to contextualize the article, clarifies existing material so it is to the point, and removes or improves material that is plainly incorrect, false, or misleading.	Student has copy-edited article with an eye to clarity and style. The original article has been copy-edited to condense the material, stress key themes, and include the student's additions. Edits use precise language and follow the "Neutral Point of View" standard, while still presenting an accurate and informed historical perspective.	Student has researched their edits based on relevant secondary sources from course readings and limited outside research, providing significant verifiable information that will allow the edits to be posted to Wikipedia. Sources allow the edits to add new and substantial information or details to the article. Student has provided citations according to Wikipedia's standards of "verifiability."	The paper explains why you chose the article, highlights the major changes made to the article, and explains why you made these changes. The paper clearly situates your work on the project within the context and themes of the course.
B	Student has selected an article that is relevant to the course.	Student has added a limited amount of new information to the article. The student highlights important themes that contextualize the article and removes or improves material that is plainly incorrect, false, or misleading.	Student has copy-edited the article with an eye to clarity. The original article has been copy-edited to stress key themes. Edits follow the "Neutral Point of View" standard.	Student has researched their edits based on secondary sources from course readings, providing some information that can be added to the article.	The paper explains why you chose the article, highlights some changes made to the article, and explains why you made these changes. The paper situates your work on the project within the context and themes of the course.
C	Student has selected an article that is relevant to the course, but not directly.	Student has not added new information to the article. The student removes material that is plainly incorrect, false, or misleading.	Student has made limited copy-edits to the existing material in the article.	Student has researched their edits based on secondary sources from course readings, providing limited information that can be added to the article.	The paper identifies one or two changes made to the article. The paper does not situate your work on the project within the course.
D	Student has selected an article that is not relevant to the course.	Student has made no substantial edits to the existing article.	Student has made no copy-edits to the existing material in the article.	Student has not researched their edits based on secondary sources.	The paper does not effectively identify or explain the changes you made to the article.

Appendix E

Outline and Objectives of the Podcasting Project

Instead of a standard term paper or research paper, the final project will consist of the production of a short podcast episode about modern Jewish history and how it relates to global and contemporary issues. Students will work in small teams and select from a number of themes and topics. You may design the framework for your episode as you see fit. You will be tasked with researching, writing, and recording an episode that is approximately 20-30 minutes (depending on the size of your team). You will be graded on the episode as well as an individual brief reflection paper on the project.

Learning Objectives

- Students will delve into an aspect of the course they personally find to be interesting, and think deeply about how the topic relates to global and contemporary issues.
- Students will learn about and utilize a communication medium that requires research and writing skills, but is also oral in nature rather than only written.
- Students will develop and exercise writing skills of concision and clarity in order to transfer detailed knowledge to a public audience of non-experts.
- Students will gain technical skills that are applicable in a range of settings.
- Students will consider how public knowledge is produced and promulgated in various media.

Project Details

- In a group of two or three students, you will select a topic from among a series of suggested themes (see below for the list of themes). Alternatively, you can come up with your own topic, but it must be approved by the instructor.
- Over number of weeks, we will explore as a class how to produce a podcast episode, working with UCLA's Studio 22 and Multi-Media Artist Collective (MMAC).
- The project will consist of (a) researching and writing an episode, (b) recording the episode, and (c) completing a rough edit of the episode. (Ultimately, the aim will be to post all completed episodes online for listeners to enjoy and so you can point to your episode as an example of your work and the skills you have gained.) Finally, you will (d) write a brief paper (two pages, double-spaced) reflecting on the podcasting project, the themes of your episode, and what you have learned.

a) **Researching and Writing the Episode**

- You will research, outline, write, and record the episode. You will have a great deal of creative freedom in how you want to do the episode, but

you are only expected to be speaking (there's no need for special effects or background music). Podcast episodes usually consist of an intro, a main section (or multiple segments), and an outro that summarizes the episode.
- Your research will include materials assigned for class, as well as a limited set of secondary materials related to the topic.
- Some ideas for how to structure an episode include:
  - Alternating monologues between group members discussing aspects of the topic.
  - Conducting a discussion between the co-hosts about the theme, perhaps examining primary sources.
  - Presenting a debate format between the co-hosts, with each person taking a particular position.
- Depending on how you structure the episode, it can either be fully scripted or you can set up an outline for a conversation and record it as it goes. Either way, you will need to do some form of writing to structure the episode and plan it out in advance.

b) **Recording the Episode**

- On the basis of your planning and research, you will record the episode at UCLA's Studio 22 or at the Music Library's recording space.

c) **Editing the Episode**

- After recording the episode, you will put together a rough cut of the episode (for instance, removing extraneous cross-talk).
- Please note that you *do not* need to do any audio clean-up or audio engineering. We have received a small grant from the Office of Instructional Development that will allow us to hand this off to a professional.

d) **Writing the Brief Reflection Paper**

- In addition to the podcast episode (which is a collaborative effort), you will write a brief individual reflection paper (two pages, double-spaced) in which you will reflect on the podcasting project, the theme of your episode, and what you have learned through it.

Project Timeline

This project is designed to be exciting and interesting, yet also practical and doable over the course of the ten-week quarter. We will have two class sessions dedicated to the project, and Studio 22 also has resources and consultations available to help you with any technical topics.

- Week 2: Tutorial at Studio 22.
- Week 3: Listen to an existing episode of a history-related podcast and write a short critique.

- Week 5: Record a brief "test" podcast on any topic, which we will use for a peer-review exercise during a second tutorial session at Studio 22 (details provided in Week 4).
- Weeks 6-7: Student groups will submit episode outline and meet with instructor to check in on the status of their project.
- Weeks 6-9: Student groups will record their episode and edit it afterwards.
- When students have completed the episode, they will hand it off to our audio engineer, who will produce and mix the final episode.

Grading and Expectations

The podcast episode will be a group collaboration. Each episode will be given a group grade based on a rubric (distributed separately), and the expectation is that all group members will contribute equally to the project. If for any reason it is clear that one or more members of the group are not contributing, their grades will reflect this. Your grade will also reflect your individual brief reflection paper (due at the end of the quarter) and the podcast critique paper (due Week 3).

Possible Episode Topics

Early Modern Jewish History   The Ghetto
The Enlightenment   Emancipation and Civil Rights
Jews in the Russian Empire   Jewish Migration to America
Development of Religious Reform   Neo-Orthodoxy
Zionism and its Critics   Formation of the State of Israel
The Rise of Nazism and Fascism   The Holocaust
Reconstruction of Life after the Holocaust

Appendix F

Rubric for the Podcasting Project

	Selecting the Topic and Format	Creating Content and Writing	Researching Sources	Writing the Show Notes	Writing the Brief Paper
A	Students have selected a theme directly relevant to course. Students explore one or two specific issues under that subject with an appropriate format that allows them to explore how and why modern Jewish history matters.	Students have created an episode that is well organized with a clear introduction and conclusion. Students have conducted pre-writing, outlining, and planning. Students present detailed discussion and analysis of major themes and sources, demonstrating deep knowledge of the material and situating the episode within the wider themes of the course. Students clearly articulate an argument or explicate a debate about the topic and why it matters in a broad social and historical context. Students edit the episode for content to remove superfluous material and keep the conversation focused. Each student participates equally in the episode.	Students have planned the episode based on research from appropriate secondary sources such as class readings that inform the conversation and are discussed in detail. Students may discuss or debate primary sources.	Students have prepared detailed "show notes" with links to relevant articles and sources. Students have edited a transcription or detailed summary of the episode as a companion essay to the audio. Students reference appropriate secondary sources as "citations." If relevant primary sources are discussed, students provide excerpts or links to sources so they may be read in conjunction with the episode.	The paper explains your choice of topic, articulates the argument you make in the episode, details your contribution to the project, and justifies the creative choices you made. The paper clearly situates your project within the context and themes of the course.
B	Students have selected a theme that is relevant to the course, but not directly. Students use a format that allows them to explore how modern Jewish history matters.	Students have created an episode that has an introduction and conclusion, but they are not clear. Students have conducted some pre-writing, outlining, and planning. Students present discussion and analysis of themes and sources, demonstrating some knowledge of the material and situating the episode within the wider themes of the course. Students articulate an argument or explicate a debate about the topic and why it matters. Students edit the episode for content. Each student participates equally in the episode.	Students have planned the episode based on research from secondary sources that inform the conversation. Students may discuss or debate primary sources.	Students have prepared "show notes" with some links to relevant articles. Students have edited a brief summary of the episode as a companion essay to the audio. Students reference some sources as "citations." If relevant primary sources are discussed, students provide excerpts or links to sources.	The paper explains your choice of topic and details your contribution to the project. The paper situates your project within the course, but not in a detailed way.
C	Students have selected a theme that is related to the course. Students do not explore the wider implications of the topic.	Students have created an episode that has either an introduction or conclusion, but not both. Students present discussion of themes and sources, demonstrating basic familiarity with material. Students articulate an argument or explicate a debate. Each student participates in the episode.	Students have planned the episode based on research from secondary sources. Students may discuss or debate primary sources.	Students have prepared "show notes," but they are bare-bones. Students have provided a summary of the episode, but it does not complement the audio. Students have not referenced sources.	The paper details your contribution to the project. The paper situates your project within the course, but not in a detailed way.
D	Students have selected a theme that is not related to the course.	Students have created an episode that does not have an introduction/conclusion. One student dominates the episode, while others do not make a significant contribution.	Students have not planned the episode based on research.	Students have not prepared "show notes" as accompanying written materials.	The paper does not effectively explain or contextualize your project.

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