



**Interdepartmental Center for Jewish Studies  
"PETERSBURG JUDAICA"  
(European University at St. Petersburg)**

**"HISTORICAL-ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACHES IN JEWISH STUDIES:  
THEORY AND PRACTICE OF FIELD RESEARCH IN FORMER SHTETLS OF UKRAINE"**

**General program description**

The "Petersburg Judaica" Center of the European University at St. Petersburg, Russia, offers a summer program in the history and anthropology of East European Jewry.

The program is targeted at advanced undergraduate and graduate students with a serious interest in Jewish or Slavic studies and a working knowledge of Russian, who wish to acquire skills of fieldwork and collect materials relevant to their research topics.

The program consists of two parts:

- 1) three-week preparation for field research at the European University at St. Petersburg, and
  - 2) two-week field work in one or two former shtetls in Ukraine, as a part of a larger research group.
- The first part includes an introductory lecture course with the following components:

**Introduction into research of oral history and culture of the former "Pale of Jewish settlement";**

**Major directions and research topics studied by the members of "Petersburg Judaica" Center;**

**Methodology of field research;**

**Russian language for field research in the region studied;**

Students will also be offered **guided tours around St. Petersburg, including "Jewish Petersburg."**

All courses will be delivered in Russian.

Altogether, there will be 52 hours of class work in St. Petersburg and 72 hours of field work in Ukraine, 14 hours each of the three weeks on average.

At the end of the theoretical part of the course students are expected to submit an essay which should include justification of their research topic and questionnaire for it.

All participants will be accommodated in a home-style hotel, with two people in a room (approximately \$ 40 per day).

During the expedition the group will stay at a local hotel; kosher food will be available.

Successful participants of the program will earn 4 credits from the European University at St. Petersburg.

Please, send your enquiries to Dr. Anna Kushkova at: [kushka@eu.spb.ru](mailto:kushka@eu.spb.ru).

**Our address:**

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## **"HISTORICAL-ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACHES IN JEWISH STUDIES: THEORY AND PRACTICE OF FIELD RESEARCH IN FORMER SHTETLS IN UKRAINE"**

### **Detailed program description:**

#### **Course 1: Introduction into research of oral history and culture of the former *shtetls*. Historical-anthropological approaches in Jewish Studies.**

1) Contemporary research of post-Soviet Jews. Ideological and social context of the notions "Soviet Jews" and "Russian-speaking Jews." Major approaches to the studies of Soviet and post-Soviet Jews (lecturer: A. Lvov) (2 hours).

2) Field research in former shtetls, 1990s-2000s. Foreign research (linguistics, the Holocaust). Expeditions of Petersburg Jewish University (studies of the monuments of Jewish material culture). Ethnolinguistic research (works by O. Belova and M. Kaspina). Project "Museum of Jewish History," its major aims and directions of research (lecturer: A. Lvov) (2 hours)

3) History and culture of South Podolia Jews (lecturer: V. Dymshits) (2 hours)

4) Studies on *shtetl* in XIX and XX cc. (lecturer: V. Dymshits) (2 hours)

5) Studies of *shtetl* architectural heritage, end XIX – XX c. (lecturer: A. Sokolova) (2 hours)

Total: 10 hours

#### **Course 2. Expeditions of "Petersburg Judaica" center: major research areas.**

1) Social and symbolic use of architectural realities, both extant and destroyed, for constructing and representation of the Jewish cultural landscape. Specific features in the architecture of common "Jewish" houses (based on interviews recorded from inhabitants of the former *shtetls*). Concept of architectural and (house)construction tradition; its transformation in Podolian shtetls in the XIX – beginning of the XX c. (lecturer: A. Sokolova) (2 hours)

3) Blood and matzoh: texts, practices, significations (interethnic relations as lieux de memoire) (lecturer: A. Lvov) (2 hours)

4) Jewish cemetery: a place which one does not visit (transformation of commemoration practices in a contemporary Jewish town) (lecturer: V. Dymshits) (2 hours)

5) "Refined Jews": Yikhes and Social Status in the (Post)-Soviet shtetl (lecturer: A. Kushkova) (2 hours)

6) Jewish professions in the shtetl (lecturer: M. Khakkarainen) (2 hours)

Total: 12 hours

#### **Course 3. Methodology of field research**

1) Informational space of a small town. Creating a communicative situation for interviewing (introduction, presentation of the topic, distribution of roles during the interview, etc.). Ways of asking questions in ethnographic interview (lecturer: A. Kushkova) (2 hours)

2) Yiddish in the interviews (level of Yiddish competence, "minimal set" of Yiddish expressions necessary for interviewing) (lecturer: V. Dymshits) (2 hours)

3) Ethical aspects of field interviews. Dependence between the topic of research and methodology of interviewing. Texts for "internal" and "external" use. Metaphors of fieldwork: anthropologist as the inquisitor/ accomplice/ gossipmonger (lecturer: A. Kushkova) (2 hours)

3) Analysis of existing field questionnaires, composing/ correcting of individual questionnaires for each course participant. Practicing methodology of recording interviews (lecturer: N. Evseenko) (6 hours)

Total: 12 hours

#### **Course 4. Russian language for field work in the region studied**

1) Phonetic specificities of Russian, Ukrainian, and *surzhik* (mixed Ukrainian-Russian variant) in Southern Podolia. Phonetic analysis of field interviews recorded in 2005-2007 (lecturer: N. Evseenko) (4 hours)

2) Grammatical and lexical specificities of Russian, Ukrainian, and *surzhik* in Southern Podolia. Grammatical and lexical analysis of field interviews recorded in 2005-2007. (lecturer: N. Evseenko) (8 hours)

Total: 12 hours

#### **1 lecture and 2 guided tours around St. Petersburg, including "Jewish Petersburg."**

Total: 8 hours

#### **Examination:**

2 writing assignments (individual plan of work with field questionnaire and a transcript of an interview fragment)

1 oral exam (justification of questionnaire and methods of interviewing)