We shall examine the forms, materials, and structures of synagogues, the centers of Jewish communal life and worship, from their beginnings in the ancient world to the twentieth century. Using the comparative method, we shall explore regional influences in addition to links between liturgy and architectural form. To understand how the choices made in the construction of synagogues reveal the realities and aspirations of Jewish communities at different times and in different places, we shall discuss when and why structural and stylistic forms were adopted, why certain innovations were introduced, and why certain symbolic elements were expressed. Whenever possible, we shall compare synagogues in appropriate respects to buildings of other faiths as well as to secular buildings. Site visits to synagogues in New York will allow us to examine materials and forms first-hand.

Outline of topics

- The origins of the synagogue
- Medieval Europe
- The Renaissance in Eastern Europe
- The oriental influence
- The modern era
- The Classical period
- The Renaissance in Italy
- Western taste
- The search for a style

Meeting time and place

Glueck Center 417
Tuesday, 6:45-9:30 p.m.

Instructor

Paul Glassman
Telephone 917.434.0954
Electronic mail: paul.glassman@yu.edu
Office hours: by appointment

General course requirements

- Two unexcused absences are allowed; three absences result in a lower final grade by 1/3 (e.g., A- to B+); four absences result in a reduction of one full letter grade (e.g., A- to B-); five absences will result in a failing grade.
- Punctuality: more than two tardy arrivals result in reduction of final grade by 1/3 (e.g., A- to B+).
- No food is allowed in class.
- Cellular telephones will be turned off and remain out of sight for the entire duration of class.
- Examinations cannot be rescheduled; written and oral work cannot be accepted after the due date.
- Mid-term presentation: oral presentation of comparative analysis
Mid-term examination
Final project: building analysis
Final examination
The course looks at key examples of the development of building cultures, types, and styles. Therefore we examine images of some church buildings that had influence over the design of synagogue buildings—always from an architectural perspective and toward the course objective of understanding the built environment. While the instructor will always remain sensitive to students’ religious obligations, students will, nonetheless, be responsible for knowing all class content.

Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations should make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services, akelsen@yu.edu or 646.592.4280 during the first week of class. Once you have been approved for accommodations, contact me to ensure the successful implementation of those accommodations.

Grading
Abstracts and summaries, 10%
Mid-term examination, 25%
Presentation, 20%
Final project (paper), 20%
Final examination, 25%

Research support
Get all the support you need with research for your courses. The Yeshiva University Libraries (library.yu.edu) offer individualized consultations that will help you locate and cite journal articles, books, and other credible sources for solid papers, presentations, and reports. Skilled information-seekers succeed academically and in the workplace. Prepare for the future by making an appointment here.

Free Help with Your Writing!
The Wilf Campus Writing Center, in Furst Hall, offers individualized tutoring that can support your writing for this course. All writers need feedback, even strong ones. Find out more and make an appointment at www.yu.edu/wilf/writingcenter.

Academic support
The Office of Academic Support provides services and resources designed to help students develop more efficient and effective study skills and strategies. Individual support is available in areas such as time management and organization, active reading, note-taking, exam preparation and test-taking skills. The office is located in Furst Hall, suite 412. To schedule an appointment, call 646.592.4285 or email academicsupport.wilf@yu.edu.

Texts
Pevsner, Nicholas and John Sambrook. Pevsner’s Architectural Glossary. New Haven, Conn.: Yale, 2010. Also available as an app for iPhone. Optional.
## References


## Schedule & reading assignments (subject to revision)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 27</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>Spatial exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 3</td>
<td><strong>The ancient world</strong></td>
<td>On site: Hebrew Tabernacle Congregation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading due: Krinsky, pp. 5-38; Sutton, pp. 10-23.</td>
<td>DUE: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY—NOBEL, PHILIP. &quot;WHAT DESIGN FOR A SYNAGOGUE SPELLS JEWISH?&quot; <em>NEW YORK TIMES</em>, 2 DEC. 2001, p. AR34.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 10</td>
<td><strong>Gothic, medieval &amp; Islamic</strong></td>
<td>On site: Zysman Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 17</td>
<td><strong>Renaissance &amp; Baroque in Western Europe</strong></td>
<td>On site: Young Israel of the West Side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 24</td>
<td><strong>Renaissance in Eastern Europe</strong></td>
<td>Reading due: Krinsky, pp. 200-235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Video recording: <em>The Lost Wooden Synagogues of Eastern Europe</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 5</td>
<td><strong>Review</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td><strong>Mid-term examination</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| December 3 | Enlightenment & historicism  
On site: Congregation Shearith Israel  
Reading due: Krinsky, pp. 155-156, 186-191, 244-250, 285-288, 364-368, 374-377; Sutton, pp. 224-267  
Outline of final project (synagogue building analysis) due |
| 8         | SUNDAY—on site: Eldridge Street Synagogue & Temple Emanu-El          |
| 10        | The new world  
Reading due: Gruber, Synagogues, chapter 9  
Guest lecture—Great Synagogue Architecture of the 1950s: Why the past is not perfect, Susan Solomon  
Review |
| 17        | Modern era  
On site: Congregation Or Zarua  
Reading due: Breffny, The Synagogue, chapter 9  
Krinsky, pp. 250-252, 289-290, 302-309; Sutton, pp. 304-353  
| 24        | Final project (synagogue building analysis) due                      |
| January 2020 3 | FRIDAY—Final examination, 9:30-11:45 a.m.                           |