

# Judaic Studies program to host events, lectures

The Judaic Studies program will work toward establishing a foundation for itself while at the same time hosting a variety of events including a lecture by Judith Baskin

By Tony Papillo  
for the Emerald

In an effort to kick off its first full year in existence, the Judaic Studies program is offering a variety of events and lectures.

Tonight the program will introduce its series of events with an

address by renowned scholar Judith Baskin at 7:30 p.m. in the Gerlinger Alumni Lounge. Baskin's lecture, titled "The Sexual Politics of Piety: Studying Medieval Jewish Women," is free and open to the public, said Matthew Dennis, program co-director.

The program was established at the University last year, primarily with funds from the Harold and Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation. Core courses for the program started being offered this September through the College of Arts and Sciences.

Dennis said he is working to further solidify the program's curriculum throughout the school year.

"The importance for this year, is to get a firm foundation, through core courses offered on a cooperative basis with other departments and programs within the College of Arts and Sciences," he said.

The program is an interdisciplinary academic program that focuses on studying Jewish civiliza-

tion and its influence on history, culture and thought.

Dennis said he hopes the program will continue to expand its student base, while still maintaining a commitment to contributing to the liberal arts education at the University. In order to accomplish this, Dennis said plans are underway to hire new faculty and enhance the development of the program's core courses.

Judaic Studies Professor Don Levi said he is excited to see the level of enthusiasm in the students.

"There are students from all over the campus, with varying backgrounds, not just those with a major in the Program of Judaic Studies. They are interested in studying religion, Christianity, and the influences of Judaism on all parts of the world," he said.

Professor Jonathan Skolnik said he sees a need to build up the program.

"The students I interact with in my courses all seem excited and engaged by the material presented," Skolnik said. The desire still

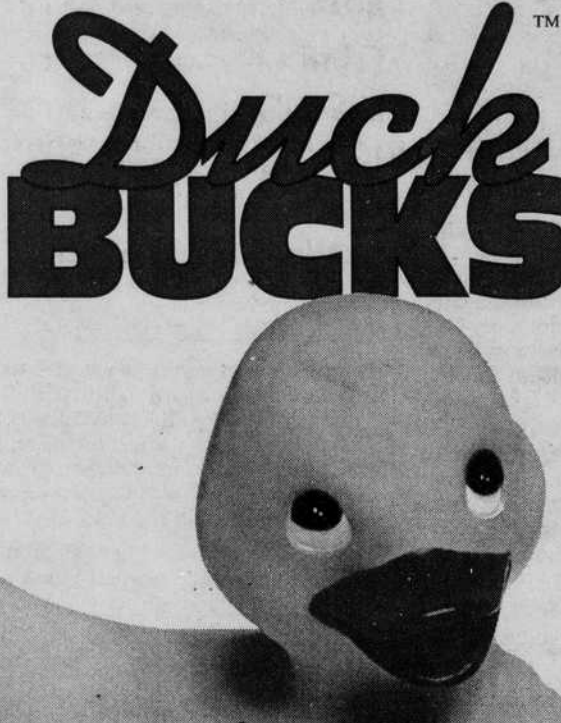
lies in hiring more faculty to teach in the program."

Dennis added that he hopes speakers like Baskin will help improve the program's visibility on campus.

Baskin is a professor in Judaic Studies at the University of Albany. Her various honors as a professor include a 1992 Education Endowment Award from the Women's Institute for Continuing Jewish Education and a 1993 Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching from the State University System of New York.

According to Dennis, Baskin will explore how women in medieval Jewish communities had limitations in almost all realms of society. But Baskin will also examine ways in which these women were still able to integrate themselves into the mainstream of Christian Europe.

For more information about the lecture or the Judaic Studies program, call 346-3950.




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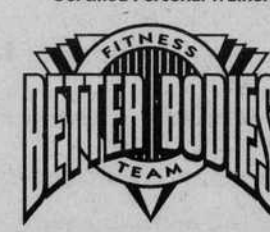
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