



Stuart and Suzanne Grant Center for the American Jewish Experience



TULANE
UNIVERSITY



Finding Our Niche, Leading the Nation

Tulane's Jewish Studies program began modestly, with just a handful of elective courses. Engagement across the university broadened and student interest skyrocketed — so much so that classroom doors could not open fast enough. As the program matured, a defining question emerged: how could we build on this momentum, expand our reach, and shape a distinct identity in an evolving academic and cultural landscape?

The answer is the Stuart and Suzanne Grant Center for the American Jewish Experience — the only academic center in the country solely dedicated to exploring the American Jewish story from a holistic, interdisciplinary perspective. Since its launch in 2019, the Grant Center has become the cornerstone of a revitalized Jewish Studies department: expanding our curriculum, drawing national attention, and creating new opportunities for students and scholars alike. Tulane students benefit from a rich academic experience that blends coursework, immersive programming, and access to nationally recognized faculty.

But the Grant Center's impact reaches far beyond campus. Nationally recognized events draw wide audiences and reflect the Center's growing role in shaping public dialogue about Jewish life in America. Rooted in New Orleans, the Grant Center embodies the creativity, diversity, and communal spirit that define the city itself.

At this pivotal moment in American Jewish history — when Jewish Studies enrollments are dwindling at many universities — Tulane stands out for moving boldly forward: investing in a distinctive area of strength and building a platform for leadership, learning, and engagement.

Dr. Michael R. Cohen

Stuart and Suzanne Grant Professor
of the American Jewish Experience
Director, Grant Center for the
American Jewish Experience



Tulane University's New Model for American Jewish Studies

At a moment of national urgency
and generational change, Tulane has
emerged as a bold leader in American
Jewish Studies.

ADDRESSING THE CURRENT MOMENT

At the Stuart and Suzanne Grant Center for the American Jewish Experience, we are committed to addressing antisemitism and fostering understanding through education and engagement. We believe that by sharing the rich and varied narratives of the American Jewish experience, we can challenge misconceptions and promote empathy across communities. Our mission is to actively engage Jewish and non-Jewish communities, encouraging meaningful dialogue that fosters respect and appreciation for Jewish culture and history. Together, we strive to create a more inclusive society where all individuals can learn, grow, and work towards a future free from hate and prejudice.

**“We are at an inflection point in
American Jewish history... the
narrative was that [antisemitism]
was no longer really a force in
American Jewish life but we know
that’s not true.”**

— REBECCA KOBRIN

Professor at Columbia University
and Audrey G. Ratner Series Speaker





Explore Our Programs

ROOTED, VIBRANT, AND OUTWARD-FACING

Our programming engages students, inspires the public, and advances cutting-edge research. Grounded in three core commitments — student engagement, public impact, and academic innovation — the Grant Center creates transformative experiences that bridge classroom and community, tradition and innovation, local stories and global conversations. This bold, forward-thinking model positions Tulane as a national leader in American Jewish Studies and a hub for shaping the future of the field. Our work unfolds across three core areas: empowering students, engaging the broader public, and advancing the field through scholarship.

STUDENT PROGRAMS

Empowering Students Through Learning and Leadership

At the Stuart and Suzanne Grant Center for the American Jewish Experience, student engagement is at the heart of our mission. Through innovative courses, research fellowships, and real-world partnerships, we equip Tulane students with the tools to lead, think critically, and make a lasting impact — within and beyond the Jewish community.

- **The Audrey G. Ratner Jewish Leadership Course** is a fully enrolled, high-impact program that integrates academic study with hands-on experience. Students explore models of Jewish leadership

while participating in service-learning placements at institutions such as the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, the Jewish Community Center, and Touro Synagogue. A close collaboration with Tulane Hillel enriches the course through student-led programming and campus initiatives — ensuring that students apply what they learn in tangible, forward-looking ways.

- Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the Grant Center also offers **Student-Faculty Research Fellowships** that foster deep intellectual collaboration. Through named opportunities like the **Sylvia R. and Lawrence N. Margolies Fellow** and the **Lawrence Kanter Fellow**, students and faculty work together on projects that contribute to both the Department of Jewish Studies and the wider Jewish community.

PUBLIC IMPACT & COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Bringing Jewish Studies to Life

At the Stuart and Suzanne Grant Center for the American Jewish Experience, community engagement begins in New Orleans — with deep partnerships, educational outreach, and inclusive events that connect people to Jewish life and learning. But it doesn't stop there. We also see community engagement as a broader commitment: to public scholarship, storytelling, and cultural programming that make the American Jewish experience accessible to wider audiences. For us, 'community' means both the city we call home and the broader public we reach through thoughtful, inclusive programming.

- **The Audrey G. Ratner Speaker Series** brings internationally recognized voices — scholars, artists, public intellectuals, and Jewish communal leaders — to Tulane and the broader New Orleans community. Through lectures, roundtables, and films, the series fosters vibrant conversations around American Jewish history, culture, and civic life.
- The original theatrical production **Only Miracles**, developed in partnership with director Dodd Loomis and local

REFLECTIONS

In the classroom and beyond

“Being part of the Grant Center’s Student Working Group has given me such unique and exciting opportunities to help bring meaningful events to life. The Grant Center’s programming highlights culture and promotes rigorous scholarship, deepening my understanding of the Jewish American experience in the South.”

— AVI GORODETSKI

CLASS OF 2027

“The Grant Center really thinks broadly about how we can insert the experience of America’s Jews into larger discussions.”

— REBECCA KOBRIN

PROFESSOR AT COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY AND GUEST RATNER
SERIES LECTURER

“I truly believe that the work we are doing is changing the way people think about the Jewish American community.”

— EMILY BRAUNINGER-SWAN

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR,
GRANT CENTER

“The Grant Center provided me with an opportunity to take my interest in Jewish Studies outside the classroom. With diverse lectures, theater productions and partnerships with local organizations, they bring Jewish academics, culture and community to life. Being a part of the Grant Center Student Working Group also provided me with opportunities to grow as a leader in my ability to program and coordinate events, skills that have been incredibly helpful in my professional life in the Jewish nonprofit sector since graduating. I’m so grateful for the space that the Grant Center provides for students to explore Judaism in new ways.”

— ZOË SILVERBERG
CLASS OF 2024

“The Grant Center’s leadership has redefined what it means to study American Jewish life on a global scale. Its work with Monash University is not just a partnership — it’s a beacon for how Jewish Studies can thrive through international cooperation.”

— DAVID SLUCKI
DIRECTOR, AUSTRALIAN CENTRE
FOR JEWISH CIVILISATION,
MONASH UNIVERSITY

artists, centered on the story of Holocaust survivor Rose Rosenkranz. The program combined live performance with educational outreach, including school visits and powerful conversations about memory, resilience, and moral courage — at a time when Holocaust education is more urgent than ever. This program reflects our broader commitment to sharing Jewish history not just through academic texts — but through live storytelling, public memory, and experiential learning.

- The **Beinner Symposium** convenes leading scholars across disciplines, bringing them together with journalists and community leaders, for exploration of the American Jewish experience. The inaugural symposium asked how the past can help us understand this defining moment for American Jews. Future symposia will continue to deepen scholarly exploration while expanding public-facing elements that bring critical conversations to wider audiences.
- The **Culture & Heritage Series** highlights how cultural and culinary traditions offer a powerful entry point into Jewish life — especially when shared in community settings. From panel discussions to hands-on cooking demonstrations, the series explores New Orleans’s layered history through a Jewish lens and examines how food, identity, and tradition shape the city’s cultural fabric. Future programming will expand to include film, theater, and visual art, further illuminating the ongoing influence of Jewish experience in New Orleans.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Advancing the Field Through Academic Innovation

As a national engine for cutting-edge scholarship, the Stuart and Suzanne Grant Center for the American Jewish Experience is reshaping how American Jewish history is studied, understood, and taught. Through convenings, collaborative research, and international partnerships, the Grant Center fosters a vibrant academic ecosystem that places Tulane at the forefront of the field.



- The **Oxford Handbook of American Jewish History**, co-edited by Grant Center Director Dr. Michael Cohen and Dr. Shari Rabin (Oberlin), serves as a landmark volume in the field. Bringing together senior scholars and emerging voices, the volume maps the state of the discipline while charting new directions. With essays that bridge American Jewish history and broader questions in modern Jewish and American studies, the Handbook is an essential resource for scholars, educators, and students alike.
- **Grant Center Working Groups** bring together scholars from across the humanities and social sciences to tackle pressing questions in American Jewish life. These interdisciplinary collaborations have sparked the creation of new subfields, informed national research agendas, and connected American Jewish studies with wider academic conversations. The model fosters sustained intellectual exchange and builds a global community committed to rethinking the relevance of American Jewish history to participants' fields of study.
- Through hosting **national conferences** — including the American Jewish Historical Society's Biennial Conference, the Jewish American and Holocaust Literature Annual Conference, and the Southern Jewish Historical Society's Annual Conference — the Grant Center has become a key platform for leading organizations to amplify American Jewish experiences across time and place.
- The Center is also expanding the field's geographic scope. In 2023, it co-hosted the **Histories of Migration and Global Capitalism Conference** in Sydney, Australia, in partnership with the University of New South Wales. The gathering convened scholars from around the world to examine



transnational migration since the 19th century, situating Jewish stories within larger networks of movement, commerce, and cultural exchange. The conference introduced Jewish Studies scholars to new methods, and it brought scholars of other disciplines and fields into conversation with American Jewish history.

- A newly launched **transpacific partnership with Monash University** adds further global dimension. With faculty exchanges, digital learning modules, and joint public programming underway, this collaboration connects Tulane students and scholars with international counterparts to explore Jewish experience through a comparative, global lens. Together, these initiatives are helping to position Tulane as a hub for international collaboration and a leader in the next generation of American Jewish scholarship.

DIGITAL PLATFORMS FOR PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

Our new website, **AmericanJewishExperience.org**, serves as a dynamic digital hub for the study of American Jewish life. It showcases the Grant Center’s expanding reach through highlights of major conferences, innovative research, and fellowships that promote interdisciplinary collaboration. A growing digital archive offers open access to scholars, students, and the general public — inviting both Jews and non-Jews to explore the richness and complexity of the American Jewish experience.

With interactive content, multimedia storytelling, and commentary from leading faculty, the site brings our work to life in vivid, accessible ways. This digital platform ensures that the Grant Center’s impact is not only visible — but scalable — extending Tulane’s leadership in American Jewish Studies across the country and around the world.

MEET THE TEAM



DR. MICHAEL R. COHEN *Founding Director, Grant Center,
Stuart and Suzanne Grant Professor of the American Jewish Experience*

Dr. Michael Cohen is a nationally recognized historian of American Jewry whose work focuses on Jewish economic history, Jewish migration, and Jewish religious life. As the founding director of the Grant Center, he has led its rapid rise as a national hub for scholarship, programming, and public engagement. His books include *Cotton Capitalists* (NYU Press), a finalist for the Saul Viener Book Prize, and *The Birth of Conservative Judaism*, and he is co-editor of the forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of American Jewish History*. A frequent speaker and contributor, Cohen brings deep expertise and visionary leadership to Tulane's role in shaping the field of American Jewish Studies.



DR. ILANA HOROWITZ *Fields-Rayant Chair in Contemporary Jewish Life*

Dr. Ilana Horowitz is a sociologist of religion and education who examines how gender, ethnicity, race, social class and religious upbringings shape our lives. Her work connects the American Jewish experience to modern American demographic and social questions, building upon Tulane's strengths in American Jewish history. She bridges scholarship and leadership through the Audrey G. Ratner Jewish Leadership Course. Widely published in academic journals, her research has also garnered national attention in outlets like *The New York Times*, making her work both influential and accessible.



DR. GOLAN MOSKOWITZ *Assistant Professor in Jewish Literature and Culture*

Dr. Golan Moskowitz is a cultural historian and literary scholar whose work explores post-Holocaust memory, queer Jewish creativity and Jewish literature, art and film. He is the author of *Wild Visionary: Maurice Sendak in Queer Jewish Context*. He serves as Book Review Editor for *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* and directs the Jewish American and Holocaust Literature (JAHLit) Symposium. His current project is a cultural history of Jewish American involvement in the art of drag.



EMILY BRAUNINGER-SWAN *Assistant Director*

With a strong background in project management, Emily Brauning-Swan has always been deeply passionate about Jewish history and educational storytelling. Joining the team in 2023, she brought valuable experience at the National WWII Museum. Since coming on board, she has made significant contributions in growing programming and digital content. She is particularly dedicated to educating the non-Jewish community about the American Jewish experience and raising awareness about the dangers of antisemitism. In her current role, Brauning-Swan aims to illuminate Jewish history and ensure that learning remains accessible to all.



AIMEE HUCKEBA
*Senior Program
Coordinator*



TRACY SNYDER
Operations Manager I

PHILANTHROPIC MOMENTUM SINCE 2019

Center Naming Gift:

Stuart and Suzanne
Grant Family

\$2M+ Gifts:

TAWANI Foundation/
Audrey G. Ratner Excellence
Endowed Fund for American
Jewry and Jewish Culture

Fields/Ryant Chair in
Contemporary Jewish Life

\$500K+ Gifts:

Beinner Family
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American Jewish History
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Carol Jean and Howard S.
Cohen Family Fund

Sylvia R. & Lawrence N.
Margolies Student-Faculty
Research Endowed Fund

Rottman Family Lecture
Endowed Fund

Your support has made this possible.

Since launching the Grant Center in 2019, donor generosity has driven extraordinary growth — in student engagement, national visibility, and scholarly leadership.

500+ Course Seats Filled in Spring 2025

Demonstrating high demand and broad relevance for Jewish Studies on campus.

41 Signature Public Programs

Original, high-impact events that bring Jewish history, culture, and ideas to life for campus and community audiences.

50 Guest Lectures Hosted

Featuring scholars, artists, and public intellectuals who are redefining Jewish Studies for the 21st century.

144 Scholars Engaged

Through conferences, working groups, and symposia, we're shaping the field and building a robust network of thought leaders.

500+ K-12 Students Reached

Through performances, talks, and school-based outreach, we are educating the next generation about Jewish history, identity, and values.

3K+ Community Members Engaged

Cumulative in-person and virtual attendance across all Grant Center events reflects strong and growing public engagement.

JOIN THE MOMENTUM

The future of the Grant Center is fueled by generosity. We have made tremendous progress. Now, with your partnership, we can build on that momentum:

- **Postdoctoral Fellowships** – Establish the premier national fellowship for emerging scholars in American Jewish Studies.
- **Flagship International Conferences** – Host high-profile symposia in global cities, expanding the field through a transnational lens.
- **Faculty Research Projects** – Accelerate scholarship led by Grant Center faculty on timely and transformative topics.
- **Community Engagement Programs** – Expand educational outreach, including Holocaust education, public lectures, and antisemitism trainings.
- **The Culture & Heritage Series** – Broaden this popular program to explore music, literature, and the arts in cities across the U.S.
- **Academic Working Groups** – Convene global scholars to generate open-access research in dynamic, interdisciplinary settings.
- **Institutional Partnerships** – Deepen collaborations with global, national, and local partners.
- **Digital Storytelling Initiatives** – Launch a podcast, AR/VR experience, or documentary series that makes Jewish Studies accessible and alive.
- **Publications** – Share Grant Center research widely — across campuses, communities, and cultures.

Your generosity strengthens a thriving national platform — and ensures that this vital work continues for generations to come.

SCAN QR CODE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT GIVING OPPORTUNITIES OR TO JOIN OUR GROWING CIRCLE OF SUPPORTERS.





TULANE UNIVERSITY

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