



Gratz Insider, April 2016 - Story Continuation

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## Faculty News

This month, **Professor Steinlauf** participated in a panel discussion on diaspora nationalism in politics and literature at the [Third International Polish Jewish Studies Workshop](#), held at the University of Illinois. At these conferences, international scholars come together to explore recent developments in the field of Polish-Jewish studies. Dr. Steinlauf says that such conferences are “particularly important now that the new Polish government represents the extreme nationalist right wing.”

Meanwhile, **Professor Sandberg** is proudly sharing in the success of her students. One of these students, Theresa Scarso, an Italian national who received her master’s in Jewish Studies from Gratz College, recently published a book called “Gesù e la Preghiera Ebraica,” or “Jesus and Jewish Prayer,” which was based on her Gratz master’s thesis, for which Dr. Sandberg was her advisor. Scarso, now a Ph.D. student in Switzerland, honored Dr. Sandberg by granting her the privilege of writing the foreword to her book, which was then translated into Italian, leading Dr. Sandberg to describe it as the first work she had ever “done” in Italian. The book is available in the Gratz College library.

Another one of Dr. Sandberg’s students, Arthur Wolak, also used his Gratz master’s thesis as the basis for an upcoming book: “Religion and Contemporary Management: Moses as a Model for Effective Leadership.” Not only was Dr. Sandberg Wolak’s thesis advisor, but she was also his professor for courses in the MA in Jewish Studies program and in the certificate program in Jewish-Christian Studies.

In addition to basking in her students’ success, Dr. Sandberg is excitedly anticipating the start of her new adult education class, which will be offered for the first time in June. Dr. Sandberg hopes that the five-week class, called “[The Jewishness of Jesus](#),” will attract Jewish students from Gratz, as well as Christian students from the community.

She explains that the “course focuses on the Jewish background of Jesus and his family, his Jewish observance, and how his teachings are parallel to Jewish teachings.” She continues, “It is vital for people to understand that Jesus was a Jew, who reflected the beliefs and practices of first-century Judaism.”

Next month, **Professor Wachs** is also offering a brand new, five-week adult education course: “[The Quest for Meaning](#).” When asked about his new course, Professor Wachs explained:

I’m taking on some of the “big questions” that thinking people ask about any religious tradition. We’ll look at different answers proposed by thinkers throughout the generations. The quest for meaning is an inherent drive within all human beings, once their basic physical needs are being met. Judaism has its own way of looking at this quest.

This course will use the Bible, the *siddur* (prayer book) and responses from important thinkers as vehicles for study.