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International Sephardic Studies Conference at
SUNY-Binghamton to Draw Scholars From Around the World

The first international and interdisciplinary scholars

from Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Israel, Argentina, Costa Rica,
Mexico, Canada and the United States will deliver papers on their research, spanning the fields of history, culture, sociology, language and litera-ture, musicology, folklore and art history of the Jews of Spanish and Portuguese origin. Scholars will also have an opportunity to meet infor-mally to exchange ideas.
The conference, co-directed by Yedida K. Stillman, director of the Judaic Studies Program at SUNY-Binghamton, and George K. Zucker of the University of Northern Iowa (Visiting Professor of Spanish at Binghamton this semester) was planned in response to an upsurge in interest in Sephar-dic Studies, an increasingly important field of academic scholarship. Sephardic Studies will be approached from an academic, rather than reli - gious perspective, according to Stillman.
Sephardic Studies focuses on the culture of the Jews expel led from Spain in 1492 and Portugal in 1497. Some emigrated to Holl and, but the

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Sephardic Studies Conference ••• Page 2

majority settled in the Ottoman Empire, which practiced religious and cultural tolerance. Some of the largest Jewish colonies were founded in Morocco, Tunisia, Istanbul (then Constantinople), Rhodes, and Salonika, communities which flourished until the Second World War, when they met the same fate as the Ashkenazi Jews of Europe. The majority of Sephardim now live in Israel, with some communities in Latin America and in the United

Sephardic Studies Conference ••• Page 3

Sponsors of the conference include the Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences, the Graduate Office, SWANA and the Jewish Student Union, all at the University; the University of Northern Iowa; the Foundation for the Advancement of Sephardic Studies and Culture, Inc.; the Broome County Jewish Federation; Jack P. Newman; S. Levy Inc.; and Iowa Electric Light and Power Co.
The visiting scholars are to be housed in homes of community members, according to Stillman. Anyone who would like to house a Spanish, French or Italian-speaking guest is asked to call 777-3070.

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