

AJR ACADEMIC CATALOG

ACADEMIC YEAR

2026 / 2027

5787 / תשפ''ז

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I. Mission Statement

The Academy for Jewish Religion serves the needs of the Jewish People by ordaining rabbis and cantors and training leaders. We affirm our commitment to a vibrant and inclusive Jewish pluralism; to an interweaving of sacred texts, critical inquiry, spiritual engagement, innovative approaches, and thoughtful creativity; to providing educational content to the Jewish public; to creating opportunities for dialogue with interfaith partners; and to meaningful engagement with the diverse spiritual, cultural, and historical dimensions of Israel - all grounded in Torah and a profound awareness of living in the presence of God.

The Academy for Jewish Religion offers a rich and rigorous program of study and training. Its courses, Gatherings, and supplementary offerings are designed to prepare each student to engage – with competence and integrity – in the plurality of traditions and religious expressions, old and new, that make up Judaism and Jewish life. AJR graduate students are challenged by high levels of scholarship as they engage in the study of sacred text and the contemporary Jewish community. AJR ordination students are expected to satisfy standards and commitments that go beyond successful completion of their academic and professional requirements. Every AJR student will strive to meet the highest standards of morality and spiritual authenticity. A spiritual leader trained by AJR will be a person deeply engaged with God, Torah, and Israel and committed to realizing an embracing vision of Torah, *Avodah u-G'milut Hasadim* in the world. As a Zionist institution, AJR expects our students to be committed to Zionism and Israel's place in Jewish history, culture, and contemporary life. We believe that Zionism is a big tent and that there is room for many views within it, but that anti-Zionism rests outside of AJR's expectation of our students Similarly, anything that dehumanizes the other, and support for lawless vigilantism are outside of AJR's expectations of our students.. To carry such a mission, an AJR student will be a person who embodies qualities of maturity, leadership, sensitivity, and ethical responsibility. AJR graduate students and ordination students are expected to work on expanding their own personal experience with Judaism, Jewish issues, and Jewish communities. They are expected to be well-informed regarding current events and issues – religious, spiritual, cultural and socio- political – that are discussed and debated in today's Jewish world, a world that is increasingly integrated into the global community of humanity. They are expected to be able to express themselves in English with clarity and sophistication, in both oral and written form.

AJR's commitment to Zionism affirms that:

> *Am Yisrael* (The Jewish People) have a right to safe existence in our ancestral homeland.
>
> *Eretz Yisrael* (The Land of Israel) and *Hibat Tzion* (yearning for the ancestral Jewish homeland) are central pillars of our theology, history, and sacred texts.
>
> *Medinat Yisrael,* (the State of Israel) is a modern, diverse Jewish nation-state and the expression of the Jewish people's self-determination in our ancestral homeland. Israel's Declaration of Independence describes Israel as "based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture." We embrace this vision and yearn and work for its complete fulfillment.

Tzelem Elohim (the image of God) - the Biblical concept affirming that all human beings are inherently unique, deserving of dignity, and equally precious - is a foundational value.

II. Academic Calendar

Fall Term

August 10 – 13 **Fall Intersession**
October 1 – Thursday only, make up for Thanksgiving, during *hol hamoed Sukkot.*
October 5 – 8
October 12 – 15
October 19 – 22
October 26 – 29
November 2 – 5
November 8 – 11 **Fall Gathering,** no classes Thursday, November 12
November 16 – 19
November 23 – 25, Thanksgiving is Thursday, November 26.
November 30 – December 3
December 7 – 10
December 14 – 17
December 21 – 24

Spring Term

January 4 – 7, 2027 **Spring Intersession**
Jan. 11 make up for Monday classes MLK day (see below)
Jan. 12 make up for Tuesday classes for Purim (see below)
January 19 – 21, No school Monday, January 18, Martin Luther King Day.
January 25 – 28
February 1 – 4
February 8 – 11
February 15 – 18
February 22 – 25
March 1 – 4
March 8 – 11
March 15 – 18
March 22, 24, 25 – No classes on Tuesday, March 23 for Purim. Classes ***third & fourth periods*** on Monday, March 22 will be rescheduled.
March 28 – 31 **Spring Gathering**, no classes Thursday, April 1.
April 5 – 8
Monday, April 12 – Ordination Ceremony & Graduation

Summer Term

May 3 – 6 Summer Intersession
May 17 – 20
May 24 – 27
June 1 – 3, No school Monday, May 31 Memorial Day.
June 7 – 10, June 10th is *erev Shavuot*.
June 14 – 17
June 21 – 24
June 28 – July 1

July 6 – 8 No classes, Monday, July 5.
July 12 – 15
July 19 – 22
July 26 – 29
August 2 make up for Monday of Memorial Day
One Monday class will be made up at a TBD by each class.

III. AJR Administration

The AJR administration and staff are here to help answer your questions about AJR and to help guide students on their educational journeys. Our main office number is 914-709-0900 and individual phone extensions can be found on the AJR website. However, unless otherwise directed, email is typically the preferred way to connect with our staff:

- Dr. Ora Horn Prouser – CEO and Academic Dean (ohornprouser@ajr.edu)
- Cantor Michael Kasper – Dean of Cantorial Studies and Student Life (mkasper@ajr.edu)
- Rabbi Dr. Matthew Goldstone – Assistant Academic Dean (mgoldstone@ajr.edu)
- Rabbi Beth Kramer-Mazer – Dean of Admissions and Director of Placement (bkramermazer@ajr.edu)
- Rabbi Ira J. Dounn - Director of Development and Dean of Strategic Initiatives (idounn@ajr.edu)
- Rabbi Dr. Jill Hammer – Director of Spiritual Education (jhammer@ajr.edu)
- Cantor Lisa Klinger-Kantor – Director of Student Care (lklingerkantor@ajr.edu)
- Rabbi Dr. Rob Scheinberg – Rabbi-in-Residence (rscheinberg@ajr.edu)
- Rabbi Jeffrey Segelman – Director of Fieldwork (jsegelman@ajr.edu)
- Rabbi Ellie Shemtov – Librarian (librarian@ajr.edu)
- Dr. Job Jindo - Director of Master's Degree Projects (jjindo@ajr.edu)
- Rabbi Cantor Sam Levine - Ritual Skills Test Coordinator (slevine@ajr.edu)
- Suli Fassler – Senior Director of Administration (sfassler@ajr.edu)
- Rabbi David Cavill – Director of Financial Aid and Operations (dcavill@ajr.edu)
- Adina Gerver – Controller (agerver@ajr.edu)
- Linda Ripps – Registrar and Bursar (lripps@ajr.edu)
- Marisa Smith – Media and Communications Director (msmith@ajr.edu)
- Evan Goldman – Executive Assistant to the CEO and Projects Administrator
- Rosemarie Bodur – Executive Development Assistant (office@ajr.edu)
- Camille Haiduk-Cascia - Academic Affairs Assistant, Office of Admission and Placement (ccascia@ajr.edu)
- Maya Amir – Administrative Assistant

The AJR campus is located at 28 Wells Ave, Yonkers, NY 10701.

IV. General Academic Policies

A. Student Advising

Student advising prior to each trimester is available for all students. Matriculated Rabbinical students should meet with the Academic Dean or the Assistant Academic Dean and matriculated cantorial students should meet

with the Dean of Cantorial Studies for student advising before each trimester. *Kol-Bo* students may meet with any of the above advisors. A fuller meeting evaluating progress will be held in preparation for the Fall trimester. Shorter meetings will be held to advise students during the year. These advising times are set by the advisors and students can sign up for time slots that work for them. These meetings can be held by phone or by Zoom. At other times, the Academic Dean, the Assistant Academic Dean, and the Dean of Cantorial Studies are available to meet with students for individual meetings as the student needs. *Gesher* and Master's Degree students interested in an advising appointment should contact the Academic Dean or the Assistant Academic Dean.

It is important for students to meet with an advisor to ensure that the courses they are taking will count towards the degree(s) that they are pursuing. Students who do not meet with an academic advisor run the risk of enrolling in a course that will not count towards the degree(s) that they are pursuing. While the academic deans strive to review the enrollments of all students in advance of each term, it is ultimately the responsibility of each student to ensure that they are registered for courses that will contribute towards their program.

B. Required Library Information Literacy Online Module

All matriculated students, regardless of their program, must pass the Library Information Literacy Online Module by the end of their first trimester as a matriculated student. This module is intended to ensure that students have the requisite abilities to perform basic academic research. Failure to complete the module in a timely fashion may result in student grades being locked and delay of ordination/graduation. To receive a copy of the module, please contact the Librarian (librarian@ajr.edu).

C. Courses-Related Information

i. Class Hours, Preparation Time

A class during the regular term earning two credits will meet for two hours and twenty-five minutes, once a week for eleven weeks. A class during the regular term earning one credit will meet for one hour and ten minutes, once a week for eleven weeks or for two hours and twenty-five minutes once a week for six weeks. AJR also offers Intersession classes that meet either for a total of two or four full days (depending on the number of credits).

Students should expect to study for two to three hours for each hour of class time. A reading assignment of between 90 and 150 pages would be usual for some courses. In the case of courses working with primary texts, the assignment will be the preparation of specified primary texts, with background material from secondary sources.

In courses designed for ordination students, assignments should, where possible, serve the needs of a student preparing for religious leadership. In some courses, the AJR faculty will base their assignments around the working life of a rabbi and/or cantor.

ii. Required Books and Materials

Students are advised that almost all AJR courses will require the purchase of textbooks and standard reference works. The cost of these purchases is entirely the responsibility of the student. AJR lists the required textbooks that instructors notify the office of in advance of registration on the Course Description page for each given trimester. In recent years, many instructors try to require books that are available in our Digital Theological Library.

iii. Distance Courses

All required classes are offered via Zoom and ordination students are only required to gather in person at an offsite location twice a year for our multiday communal Gatherings in the fall and spring trimesters. For those who wish to take some courses in person at the AJR campus, we regularly offer an onsite intersession course option, together with an online option, in between each of the three terms. For more information about AJR's

policies and expectations with regard to participating in class through Zoom, please see the Student Zoom Handbook on the AJR website.

Please note that while courses take place online, it is required for every matriculated ordination student to participate in-person at the Fall and Spring Gatherings.

We do not allow students to use the Zoom phone number to call in to class. They may use the phone number for troubleshooting purposes or if they lose connection to their internet.

Technology Needed to Participate in Zoom Classes:

All students participating in a class at AJR via Zoom should ensure that they are using the following technology:

1. A device (computer or ipad) with a screen large enough to clearly see all participants in the class. The device should also be equipped with high quality speakers, a way to attach high quality speakers, or a way to use headphones that facilitates clear audio.
2. A strong internet connection capable of at least 25 Mbps (upload).
3. A quality camera capable of at least 720p (Standard HD).
4. A high quality microphone that allows students to be heard clearly without static.

Etiquette

We expect students to treat these courses as if they were attending in person. This means dressing according to the AJR guidelines, minimizing background noise, and ensuring that children, roommates, pets, and any other visitors don't interrupt. Additionally, all in-class rules apply. Students should treat their classes as if they are in important business meetings, and should not be engaged in other activities during class sessions.

Be advised that each session will be recorded. If a student is unable to attend a particular class, it will still count as an absence, but they will have the benefit of being able to watch the session later on. Recordings will be posted on the Populi course page. Recordings should not be shown to anyone who is not in the course (aside from AJR administration). For the privacy of everyone in a course, students are not permitted to record courses on their own – whether video and/or audio – and AJR recordings may not be downloaded.

Course Offerings

Students should be aware that not all courses are offered every year. As a general rule, one may assume that most Rabbinics, Hebrew, some Bible courses and Fieldwork Support Seminar are offered every year. For a general description of how frequently certain courses are offered, see the descriptions Section XXX: Course Catalog below.

Introductory courses such as Introduction to Bible, Introduction to Mishnah and Introduction to Liturgy are also offered every year. Most Philosophy, History, Liturgy, and Professional Skills courses are offered once every four trimesters. Students should keep this in mind when registering for courses so that they do not miss the cycle of courses.

It is easy for students to focus on one or two areas and lose sight of the total picture of what needs to be taken over the course of your program. There are eight areas of study and it can be helpful to take courses in each area each year.

There is a limit to the number of courses students are allowed to take as independent study or at another institution. (See the Independent Studies section in this Catalog.) It is advisable that you use them sparingly in your earlier years at school since you may need them during your last year to take courses that you have missed and are not offered during that year.

Five trimesters of Talmud are required for ordination. It is advisable that students take additional Talmud courses in order to develop their skills to the required level. The first two terms of Talmud are accompanied by a required supervised *havruta* session that meets weekly for a full period (there is no additional cost for *havruta*).

Students should be aware that AJR classes meet Monday through Thursday, and that they may need to be flexible in their schedules to allow for the fact that certain courses may only be given on a certain day of the week. This is important when planning synagogue work schedules for the next year. There is never a guarantee that because a certain course was taught on a particular day one year, that it will meet on the same day the next year.

iv. In Class

Please be sensitive to the needs of the group and be aware of the amount of material that each class must cover.

Please be aware of other students' needs when asking questions or making comments in class. Class participation is great, but please be considerate and conscious to not impose your personal learning needs at others' expense.

AJR students have a variety of learning styles. Please be patient with students who may move at a different pace than yours. Keep in mind that good listening skills are very important for rabbis and cantors. If you find the behavior of a particular student is interfering with your learning, please speak to them privately. Respectful, face-to-face, private discussions often clear up the matter. If the problem persists, please speak with a member of the administration.

Please turn your cell phone off or put it on silent mode during class.

When the instructor or fellow students are speaking, basic respect demands that we give them our attention. Therefore, it is a violation of basic respect to use our computer or other devices to check for email or voicemail, to surf the Internet, or to do anything that is not directly connected with the class in session. Please make sure that computers are only used for coursework for that class during classes.

Many students need or choose to eat snacks during class. This is fine as long as it is acceptable to the instructor. Please do not cook or prepare food during class.

Students and faculty are not allowed to use AI technologies for notetaking during class. This has the potential to create risks to privacy as well as the accuracy of preserving information.

While we support and encourage the use of the chat function during class, any conversation in the chat that involves controversial issues or deeper disagreements should immediately be moved to the oral conversation including the teacher. Some instructors do not constantly monitor the chat and thus if a student becomes aware of a chat conversation that involves controversial issues or deeper disagreements, they should call this to the instructor's attention. This is important as many issues are better discussed verbally in a moderated situation.

v. Attendance and Written Work

1) Attendance at AJR class sessions is an AJR requirement.

2) For 1 or 2 credit courses, students who miss two class sessions will be required to complete make-up work corresponding to the content of all sessions missed. For 4 credit courses, students who miss four class sessions will be required to complete make-up work corresponding to the content of all sessions missed. Excessive lateness, leaving class early, or regularly having your camera off will not be tolerated. At the instructor's discretion, repeated partial absences may be considered an absence requiring make-up work.

3) Students who miss a third session (in a 1 or 2 credit class) or a fifth session (in a 4 credit class) have the option of dropping the course or, if they plan on attending all subsequent sessions, converting their status in that class to that of auditor with no academic penalty and no refund of tuition, and cannot use the class towards credit for Academy requirements.

4) In the event of severe mitigating circumstances, the instructor and student will meet with a member of the Senior Administration to approve an alternative plan for meeting course requirements.

5) In order for a change of class status to take effect (e.g., withdrawing) the student must file the appropriate paperwork in the Administrative Office.

6) Please do not "call in sick" to the office. It is your responsibility to notify the instructor directly or via another student in the class. A student who has missed a class is responsible for obtaining all distributed materials and details of assignments and for learning the material covered in the class session. Faculty cannot make sure that students receive materials for classes missed. Students are responsible for watching the recording of the class session (posted on the course site on Populi).

vi. Guide for Submitting Papers

Written papers submitted as course work should be double-spaced in a standard, easily readable, 12-point font. Proper citations for all work used must be included. Unless an instructor requests a specific citation format, any of the standard citation formats such as the Chicago Style, the SBL Style, or the MLA Style may be used.

vii. Grading Policy

The preferred form of grading at AJR is conventional letter grades. There are specific courses and specific situations, however, in which a Pass/Fail grading system is the more logical option (e.g., FWSS). In this era of "grade inflation" it is important that the Academy for Jewish Religion contribute to the maintenance of reasonable standards in the award of letter grades. The award of the grade of "A" or "A-" should imply some significant level of distinction demonstrated by the student. A solid performance should earn the grade of "B" or "B+".

Letter grades are accompanied by narrative comments from instructors. These comments, which offer the chance to weigh carefully the progress made, and the successes and challenges, are often the most important piece of feedback received by students.

viii. Recordings

Please note that in general all AJR online courses, lunchtime programs, and events are recorded (with a number of exceptions including FWSS). Everyone who joins a Zoom Room understands and consents to their being recorded. Course recordings, records of the "chat," and transcriptions are only intended for the students and instructor in the particular course (as well as select AJR administrators for evaluative purposes) and *should not be shared with anyone outside of the course.* AJR typically preserves recordings of courses for one entire trimester after the conclusion of the course (e.g., recordings from a course in the Fall are preserved through the end of the subsequent Spring trimester). Students taking an incomplete for a course should be cognizant of the fact that recordings may be deleted after this time. For the privacy of everyone in a course, students are not

permitted to record courses on their own – whether video and/or audio – and AJR recordings may not be downloaded.

ix. Core Concepts

Seminar in Core Concepts is a sequence of six seminars. It includes Core Concepts Seminar 1 through 6, which comprise six trimesters of study, or sometimes fewer when two seminars are taught within a single term. The seminars cover some of the fundamental values, concepts and vocabulary of Jewish tradition. The student is expected first to gain a basic acquaintance with these terms and then to delve more deeply into them so as to appreciate their range of significance. The goal of the seminars is to gather information and to develop an integrated way of thinking about and expressing these value-concepts, so that the student may grow from an appreciation of the tradition to active and creative participation in the discourse of Torah.

Ordination students are required to take any four of the six seminar trimesters given in the sequence. The seminars may be taken in any order. Each seminar will meet for one hour and ten minutes weekly, unless it is a combination of two seminars, in which case it will meet for two hours and twenty five minutes. No credit is given for these seminars and no tuition is charged.

Students may only take Core Concepts in trimesters during which they are taking other credit bearing classes. Core Concepts is not open to registration by Gesher students. MA students are generally not allowed to register for Core Concepts unless they receive prior permission from the Academic Dean.

x. Talmud

The first two trimesters of Talmud (i.e., Intro Talmud I and Intro Talmud II) have a required supervised *havruta* session that meets for one full period each week. The *havruta* session typically meets on Thursdays. Students do not register separately for the *havruta* session and for students participating in the regular supervised *havruta* session there is no additional cost for this session.

D. Auditing Courses

For students who audit a class (including alumni auditors), taking tests, writing papers, and submitting final projects is not part of the auditing process. This serves two purposes: It allows the student to prepare for each class without the pressures that accompany tests and papers and it allows the teacher to focus more fully on the students who are taking the class for credit and paying the full tuition.

Students who audit classes are still fully responsible for class preparation and regular live attendance (they may not just watch the recording after the class meets), and they will be treated as full members during class time, able to ask questions and receive feedback. However, they will not be allowed to submit papers, tests, or final projects.

The cost of auditing a class is 50% of the tuition of the class. All requests to audit classes must be approved by the Academic Dean. Please note that non-credit bearing courses, such as Musical Skills may not be audited. Required classes may not be audited by matriculated students. Hebrew courses may not be audited by matriculated students unless the student already successfully completed that Hebrew course at AJR (or passed the corresponding exemption exam at least two weeks prior to the start of the term) and receives permission from the Academic Dean. *Gesher* students may audit classes only with the permission of the Academic Dean.

Please note that priority for enrollment will be given to students taking courses for credit. Thus, confirmation of enrollment to audit a course will only be confirmed after the matriculated student registration deadline, particularly for courses with high enrollment numbers. If a student already registered in a course for credit wishes to change to auditing that course during the add/drop period, if there are students on a waitlist for the course hoping to take it for credit, then priority will be given to students on the waitlist and the student wishing to audit will not be allowed to do so.

E. Supplemental Study

In addition to study connected with AJR courses, students should expect to read and study extensively outside the formal program to develop a breadth of familiarity with Jewish sources that cannot be covered in class.

F. Independent Study

All Independent Studies must be approved in advance by the Academic Dean.

Students are eligible to take a course as an Independent Study if:

1) The course has never been offered at AJR and there is no indication that the course will be offered at AJR prior to the student's successful completion of the program in which they are enrolled.

2) The course is offered at AJR, but the student is unable to take the course in the trimester it is offered due to a scheduling conflict with another required course or a different conflict that is approved by the Academic Dean, and it is important that the student not wait until the course is offered again.

In certain circumstances AJR will locate instructors for Independent Studies but students are ultimately responsible for finding an instructor for the proposed Independent Study who has demonstrated expertise in the subject matter and is approved by the Academic Dean.

Once approved by the Academic Dean, students must complete an Independent Study Form, which includes the regular meeting time for the independent study, and pay the Independent Study fee.

The maximum number of credits that a student is eligible to take as Independent Study is dependent upon their program and Advanced Standing status (see the section below on "Allowances for Fulfilling Course Credit"). However, exceptions may be made for ordination students in their senior year who need one or two final courses to earn their degree.

Independent Studies should be coordinated through the AJR Office and should use an AJR Zoom link that will be recorded.

After the successful completion of an Independent Study, the instructor must submit the final grade and relevant comments concerning the student's achievement to the Academic Dean.

Prior to receiving credit for an independent study, the student and instructor must together assess whether the course met the "quantifiable objectives" specified in the Independent Study Application and may be asked to submit a written statement regarding the achievement of the course objectives to the Academic Dean.

i. Independent Study Course Hours

All two credit independent study courses must meet for a minimum of 11 hours of instruction and all one credit independent studies must meet for a minimum of 6 hours of instruction ("hours" in this context refers to full hours, not "academic hours," which are 50 minutes). These hours of instruction assume that students are doing significant preparation outside of the meeting hours, translating materials, completing required readings, etc – see Section IV:C:i above for more information about preparation expectations. Beyond these minimum hours, independent studies in Hebrew must meet for a minimum of one and a half hours per session for a total of 33 hours during the term (1.5 hours twice per week for 11 weeks) and for text study courses (e.g., Bible, Liturgy, Rabbinics/*Halakhah*) the faculty recommends 16.5 hours total, one and a half hours per week. Depending on the nature of the course, the Academic Dean may require additional hours for the independent study. Unless otherwise determined in advance with the Academic Dean, meeting hours should align with the weeks of the regular AJR trimester.

ii. Independent Study Payment

a. Payment for Independent Study is not considered "Tuition" and therefore credits earned through Independent Study are not taken into account when determining a student's tuition package or financial aid for a given trimester. This means that while a student would typically pay $11,167 whether they are taking 8, 9, or 10 credits in a given trimester at AJR, any credits taken as Independent Study would not count towards this credit total and the student would still incur the Independent Study Fee (and Private Study Fee if applicable, see below). Independent Study credits are also not considered when applying for financial aid (see Section XII below).

b. Rather than paying the instructor directly, a student taking an Independent Study will pay AJR an Independent Study fee and AJR will pay the instructor directly.

c. The Independent Study fee is $1200 for a 1 credit course, $2100 for a 2 credit course, and $3900 for a 4 credit course.

iii. Private Tutoring/Coaching

In keeping with best educational practices, students are not allowed to engage in private tutoring, independent private coaching (with the exception of cantorial coaching organized through AJR), or other paid engagements (excluding MA Program supervision) with any member of the AJR faculty while the student is currently enrolled in a course that the faculty member is teaching. Only when a student has completed all assignments and received a grade from the faculty member may they enter into a tutoring/coaching arrangement. Please note that this includes any incomplete in a course with an AJR faculty member, which must be resolved prior to entering into a tutoring/coaching arrangement with that faculty member.

G. Transfer Credits

AJR only transfers credits from graduate-level programs at accredited institutions. Typically, graduate-level courses taken while pursuing studies as an undergraduate are not eligible for transfer – unless those graduate level courses were taken in the pursuit of, and counting towards, a Master's level degree from that institution.

Most classes at AJR are 2 credits (with the major exceptions of Hebrew and *Nusah,* which are each 4 credits, as well as some courses that are only 1 credit each). When AJR transfers credits from another institution this is done with an eye towards equivalent AJR courses. Thus, AJR typically transfers 2 and 3 credit courses from other institutions as 2 credit courses. A 4 or more credit course from another institution may be transferred as 4 credits, depending on the nature of the course and the AJR equivalents.

This means that students may not transfer in the full number of credits that they took at their previous institution. In every case students will sit with one of the Deans to review their transfer courses and we make every effort to make it as beneficial to the student as possible within our structures.

In order to be granted credit for outside work, the Academic Dean must pre-approve the coursework. No credit will be earned at AJR until the student presents a transcript or other acceptable documentation showing successful completion of the course with a minimum grade of B. It is strongly suggested that students transfer credits in to AJR as they take the course in order to maintain the accuracy of their transcripts. In addition, students typically may not take more advanced classes until prerequisite courses have been formally transferred in.

There is a transfer credit fee charged for each outside course added to the student's transcript, including those accepted toward the student's program from before their entrance to AJR. The transfer of credit of eight or more credits from one institution at one time will be charged a bulk transfer credit fee. All fees are listed in the Tuition and Fees section of this Catalog.

Please note that credits are not officially considered transferred until they have been approved by the Academic Dean, added to a student's transcript, and the requisite transfer credit fee has been processed.

H. Advanced Standing

Many students come to AJR having studied previously at graduate institutions and are eligible to receive advanced standing credit for that work. Prior to or during the first trimester of study, students in this situation should meet with the Academic Dean to determine:

1) Which of the student's prior credits are eligible for transfer
2) If there are equivalent AJR required courses in the student's program that the student's prior credits may count towards fulfilling.

Students who come to AJR with a strong background in particular areas of Jewish studies and/or who have had a strong involvement in the Jewish community may be able to fulfill course credit based upon their prior background. The following experiences are the primary means by which students are able to be exempt from specific required courses:

1) Relevant high-level coursework or study at another institution (this includes academic courses as well as *yeshiva* and *kollel* study [Jewish institutions of learning])
2) Significant field experience and practice serving a leadership role within a Jewish community (please note that students are generally not exempt from FWSS requirements regardless of prior experience).
3) Exemption Examination (There are currently written Exemption Exams available for the following courses: Rabbinical Program: Intro to Mishnah; Intro to Midrash; Mysticism; Medieval Philosophy; Modern Philosophy; Cantorial Program: Festival Liturgy; Musical Skills I, II, and III; Cantillation; Both Programs: History of Zionism and Israel, Counseling I and II; Education I; Ideas and Debates I and II; Life Cycle I and II; Shabbat Liturgy; High Holiday Liturgy; Intro Liturgy; some levels of Hebrew and Biblical Hebrew; students may test out of courses for which there are currently no written Exemption Exams orally.
    a. It is important to note that exemption exams are different from comprehensive exams. An exemption exam assesses a student's competence in the material relevant for a specific course while a comprehensive exam assesses a student's competence regarding a full course progression or area of study. Successful completion of an exemption exam does not indicate that a student will also be as successful on a comprehensive exam and passing a comprehensive exam does not mean that a student will be exempt from a specific course.

There is a fee for applying advanced standing – see the "Transfer Credit and Advanced Standing Fee" and "Bulk Transfer Credit and Advanced Standing Fee" below in Section XI:E. Please note that there is no fee for applying advanced standing in Modern Hebrew (i.e., Hebrew 1A-3B), Biblical Hebrew, or Liturgical Hebrew.

I. Allowances for Fulfilling Course Credit through Transfer Credits, Independent Study, and Exemption Exams

Unless otherwise noted, in this section "Rabbinical and Cantorial Programs" refer to the full 140 credits programs, which typically includes earning an MA Degree as well.

Prior to Matriculation and During the First Trimester of Matriculation

a. Prior to enrolling for the first time as a matriculated student in a program at AJR, and during the first trimester a student is enrolled as a matriculated student in a program at AJR, a student may transfer course credit from a non-AJR institution and fulfill AJR course credit

through significant prior background (i.e. Advanced Standing). Within this window, a student is eligible to transfer and fulfill credits according to the following criteria:

i. Rabbinical & Cantorial Programs – up to 93 Credits

ii. Cantors to Rabbis Track – No Credits (However, see below for students in the Cantors to Rabbis Track who are required to take more than the minimum credits for the track).

iii. M.A. Program (alone) – up to 10 Credits

iv. *Kol-Bo* Program – up to 108 Credits

Matriculated Students without Advanced Standing (after the First Trimester)

Note that this section refers to credits and prior experience for advanced standing that was earned or completed after being matriculated at AJR for a trimester. Credits or prior experience for advanced standing that was earned or completed prior to matriculating into an AJR program, but was not applied to an AJR program prior to or during a student's first trimester of matriculation, may still be used to fulfill AJR course credits even after the first trimester of matriculation.

a. Matriculated students without Advanced Standing who are currently enrolled in the Rabbinical or Cantorial Program at AJR, after the first trimester they are enrolled as matriculated students, may fulfill no more than 16 credits of AJR course credit through transfer credits, independent study, exemption examination, or any combination of these methods.

b. Regarding students in the Cantors to Rabbis Track, see below.

c. Matriculated students without Advanced Standing who are currently enrolled in the *Kol-Bo* Program at AJR, after the first trimester they are enrolled as matriculated students, may fulfill no more than 20 credits of AJR course credit through transfer credits, independent study, exemption examination, or any combination of these methods.

d. Matriculated students without Advanced Standing who are currently enrolled in the Master's Degree Program at AJR, after the first trimester they are enrolled as matriculated students, may fulfill no more than 10 credits of AJR course credit through transfer credits, independent study, exemption examination, or any combination of these methods. This does not include students enrolled in the Cantors to Rabbis Track who are also pursuing the Master's Degree.

e. The number of credits that can be fulfilled through transfer credits, independent study, exemption examination, or any combination of these methods is not cumulatively increased if a student transfers from one program to another. Thus, if a student transfers from the Rabbinical or Cantorial Program after having fulfilled 10 credits through one of these alternative means, they are only eligible for 10 more credits to be fulfilled through these means (for a total of 20 credits). Similarly, if a student transfers from the M.A. Program having fulfilled 10 credits through one of these alternative means, they are only eligible for 10 more credits to be fulfilled through these means (for a total of 20 credits). If a student transfers from one of the ordination programs to the M.A. Program after having fulfilled more than 10 credits through one of these alternative means, only 10 of these alternatively fulfilled credits may be transferred to the M.A. Program.

f. With the permission of the Academic Dean, after their first trimester students without Advanced Standing may be eligible to transfer more credits than described in this section, not to exceed

the maximums described in the preceding section on transfer credits prior to and during the first trimester of matriculation.

Matriculated Students with Advanced Standing

Note that this section refers to credits and prior experience for advanced standing that was earned or completed after being matriculated at AJR for a trimester. Credits or prior experience for advanced standing that was earned or completed prior to matriculating into an AJR program, but was not applied to an AJR program prior to or during a student's first trimester of matriculation, may still be used to fulfill AJR course credits even after the first trimester of matriculation.

a. Matriculated students with Advanced Standing who are currently enrolled in one of AJR's programs, after the first trimester they are enrolled as matriculated students, may be eligible to transfer additional credits according to the following criteria (except in extenuating circumstances):

    i. Rabbinical & Cantorial Programs

    If a student has 40 credits or more of Advanced Standing they are not eligible to fulfill course credit through transfer credits, independent study, or exemption examination.

    If a student has fewer than 40 credits of Advanced Standing, then the number of credits that they may fulfill through transfer credits, independent study, exemption examination, or any combination thereof, may be no more than 16 credits, and the total number of credits that they possess through Advanced Standing together with credits earned through one of these alternatives, may be no more than 40. Thus, a student with 36 credits of Advanced Standing is eligible to fulfill 4 credits through one of these alternative means but a student with 12 credits of Advanced Standing is only eligible to fulfill 16 credits through one of these alternative means.

    ii. Cantors to Rabbis Track

    There are different minimum numbers of credits for this track depending on whether a student already holds a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies and if they completed their cantorial training at AJR or elsewhere (see below Section XVIII:F). Regardless of which version of the track a student is in, no student in the Cantors to Rabbis track is eligible to fulfill credits through transfer credits, independent study, or exemption examination to reduce the total number of credits below the basic minimum for their version of the track (45, 54, or 74, depending). The only way to reduce the number of credits from the minimum to the basic minimum is through demonstration of mastery of Modern Hebrew. However, as noted, students in the Cantors to Rabbis track may be required to take additional courses based upon perceived gaps (whether in Hebrew, Liturgy, History, etc.). Students who are required to complete more than the minimum number of credits for the track (i.e., more than 45, 60, or 80, depending), may fulfill at least 2 credits through transfer credits, independent study, or exemption examination. Beyond these 2 credits, students may apply these other means to fulfill no more than 10% of the number of credits beyond the 45, 60, or 80 credit minimum. Thus, if a student in this track already holds an MA (and thus would typically only be required to take 60 credits) but is required to take 70 credits total to address relevant gaps in their education,

they may fulfill 2 credits through these others means (even though 10% of the 10 additional credits beyond the 60 credit minimum is only 1). If a student in this track already holds an MA (and thus would typically only be required to take 60 credits) but is required to take 100 credits total, then they may fulfill 4 credits through these others means (i.e., 10% of the 40 credits beyond the 60 credit minimum).

iii. *Kol-Bo* Program

If a student has 62 credits or more of Advanced Standing they are not eligible to fulfill course credit through transfer credits, independent study, or exemption examination.

If a student has fewer than 62 credits of Advanced Standing, then the number of credits that they may fulfill through transfer credits, independent study, exemption exam, or any combination thereof, may be no more than 20 credits, and the total number of credits that they possess through Advanced Standing together with credits earned through one of these alternatives, may be no more than 62. Thus, a student with 58 credits of Advanced Standing is eligible to fulfill 4 credits through one of these alternative means but a student with 12 credits of Advanced Standing is only eligible to fulfill 20 credits through one of these alternative means.

iv. M.A. Program

If a student has 10 credits of Advanced Standing they are not eligible to fulfill course credit through transfer credits, independent study, or exemption examination. Similarly, students in the Cantors to Rabbis Track who are simultaneously pursuing a Master's Degree at AJR are not eligible to fulfill course credit through transfer credits, independent study, or exemption examination.

If a student (who is not in the Cantors to Rabbis Track) has fewer than 10 credits of Advanced Standing, then the number of credits that they may fulfill through transfer credits, independent study, exemption exam, or any combination thereof, may be no more than 10 credits, and the total number of credits that they possess through Advanced Standing together with credits earned through one of these alternatives, may be no more than 10.

J. Accelerated Program

1) Students who come to AJR with a strong background in many areas of Jewish studies and who have had a strong involvement in the Jewish community for at least five years may be eligible for the Accelerated Program for ordination. The prior background of students in this program allows them to be exempt from many course requirements and a personalized course of study is created for each student.
2) The personalized course of study for students who already hold a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies (or the equivalent) in the Accelerated Program must have a minimum of fifty-six credits to be completed at AJR in addition to the Ritual Skill requirements, comprehensive examinations, Fieldwork and CPE, and required Clergy Formation Seminars (0 credits). For students who do not already hold a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies (or the equivalent), the Accelerated Program must have a minimum of seventy-six credits and, in addition to the Ritual Skills, comprehensive exams, Fieldwork and CPE, and the Clergy Formation Seminar requirements, they are also required to complete a Master's Project.

3) The current fee associated with the Accelerated Program is $850. This fee covers meeting with the Dean and selected faculty members to outline the requirements for the individual student's Accelerated Program.

K. New Requirements and Program Revision

The number of credits required for graduation will not be varied after a student's date of matriculation.

Within the required number of courses, if new distribution requirements or required courses are introduced, students with fifty credits or fewer in the (regular) Rabbinical, Cantorial, or *Kol-Bo* Programs, and twelve credits or fewer in the M.A. Program will be required to follow the new system. For students in the Cantors to Rabbis track of the Rabbinical Program, they will be required to follow the new system if they have fewer than:

16 residential credits if they earned their cantorial ordination elsewhere and already hold an MA in Jewish Studies (i.e., the 60 credit track)

28 residential credits if they earned their cantorial ordination elsewhere and are also pursuing an MA in Jewish Studies at AJR (i.e., the 80 credit track)

12 residential credits if they earned their cantorial ordination and MA in Jewish Studies at AJR (i.e., the 45 credit track)

New distribution requirements and required courses are only introduced at the beginning of a new trimester and only credits earned in trimesters prior to the change will be counted when considering whether a student is subject to the new system. For example, if a new distribution requirement is added for the fall trimester, any student who has not earned the requisite number of credits by the end of the previous summer term is subject to the new requirement. Incomplete credits that were not resolved prior to the addition of new requirements are not counted towards a student's total number of credits to remain under the prior system.

For a regular ordination program, up to 25 credits of Transfer Credits or Advanced Standing that were fully processed (including payment of the Transfer Credit fee) and added to a student's transcript prior to the change are included in the total number of credits to remain under the prior system (i.e., at least 25 credits of the 50 credits must be completed at AJR). For the MA Program (alone), up to 6 credits of Transfer Credits or Advanced Standing that were fully processed (including payment of the Transfer Credit fee) and added to a student's transcript prior to the change are included in the total number of credits to remain under the prior system (i.e., at least 6 credits of the 12 credits must be completed at AJR). Those in the Cantors to Rabbis track of the Rabbinical Program are not eligible for Transfer Credits or Advanced Standing that may be used towards remaining within a prior requirement system.

If a matriculated student applies to, is accepted into, and changes programs (e.g., from Cantorial to *Kol-Bo* or M.A. to Rabbinical) they are responsible for the curriculum of the program into which they switch at the time of matriculation into that program. Similarly, a student who withdraws and then reapplies and is accepted is responsible for the curriculum at the time of their re-matriculation. However, a *Kol-Bo* student who has already earned 50 credits and transfers to either the Rabbinical or Cantorial Program is not responsible for a new curriculum as they were already matriculated into that program by nature of being in the *Kol-Bo* Program.

L. Learning Accommodations

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), as amended by the ADA Amendment Act of 2008 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, AJR is committed to providing access and reasonable accommodation for any disabled member of its community. Any student who wishes to request an accommodation for equal access to learning must provide AJR with current and appropriate medical or

diagnostic documentation regarding their disability. The student must then meet with the Academic Dean to discuss what reasonable and appropriate accommodations can be made.

AJR strives to provide for students with learning disabilities those reasonable accommodations that will help them succeed in our programs. These include (but are not limited to) extended times for examinations and openness to extensions on deadlines for assigned work. It should be stressed that all students are held to the same academic standards including Hebrew language skills.

Most of AJR's population is made up of second-career students. Sometimes middle-aged students, who have been out of school for a number of years, find, after they have been accepted in our programs to engage in graduate-level academic study, that they have symptoms of learning disabilities. Other times, AJR instructors or administration members identify symptoms of learning disability in a student. In these cases, students are advised to undergo a full educational evaluation.

For students who require tutoring in Hebrew language or other subjects, the Academic Dean maintains a list of approved tutors. AJR is always willing to evaluate and accept tutors recommended by students. Administration or faculty consult with the tutor to ensure that what is being worked on will indeed aid the student to meet the necessary requirements. None of the remedial support services are credit-bearing.

For complaints to New York State regarding disabilities, please see below Section VIII.

M. Specific Policies for GI Bill Recipients

Credit for Prior Learning (38 CFR 21.4254(c)(3). The school maintains a written record of the previous education and training of the GI Bill recipient and grant credit appropriately, with the training period shortened proportionately.

Pro Rata Refund (38 CFR 21.4254(c)(13), 21.455). We will refund the unused portion of prepaid tuition and fees on a pro rata basis. The exact proration will be determined on the ratio of the number of days of instruction completed by the student to the total number of instructional days in the course. Any amount in excess of $10.00 for an enrollment fee or registration fee will also be prorated.

N. Academic Honesty

Students at AJR must ascribe to the highest standards of academic honesty. Faculty with suspicions about student work meeting AJR's standards for honesty are required to promptly bring their concerns to the Dean.

Plagiarism

- Any student found to have engaged in plagiarism from a published book, internet source, or from other students may be expelled from the school. Expulsions may be appealed to the Presidential Council. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, taking someone else's work or ideas – published or unpublished – and passing them off as one's own without proper footnoting or citation. If you are not clear on what is included as plagiarism, please speak with the Academic Dean, Dr. Ora Horn Prouser, at the beginning of the trimester. For examples of common types of plagiarism, see here.
- Plagiarism includes the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), automatic translation software, and other technologies that are not explicitly approved by an instructor in advance of an assignment. One of AJR's Institutional Goals is to help students develop competency in critical thinking, as well as written and oral communication. The use of artificial intelligence programs that can automatically generate essays or presentations, or organize information based upon available information on the internet, detracts from achieving growth in these areas and therefore is not permitted unless explicitly approved by an instructor in advance. Even though current US copyright guidance suggests that one who makes meaningful changes to AI generated material may hold copyright to that revised material, using this

technology without explicit permission from faculty is against AJR policies. More policies related to AI usage can be found below in Section VI:Y and AJR's complete AI Policy can be found here.

- Students are not permitted to submit the same work to fulfill separate requirements without the express knowledge and permission of each instructor.
- Students may not work together on exams (take-home or in-class), projects, or papers, unless permission is specifically granted by the instructor.
- If a submitted work that includes plagiarized material and they come to the instructor within 72 hours of submitting the work, then they will fail the course but the infraction will not result in expulsion. This exception may only be used once within a student's time at AJR.

Copyright Infringement

Please note that unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material, including unauthorized peer-to-peer file sharing, may subject the students to civil and criminal liabilities. AJR students who engage in unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material, including unauthorized peer-to-peer file sharing, whether through the use of AJR's information technology system (Populi), or otherwise using AJR resources (including, but not limited to, AJR computers, email, discussion boards, and listservs), may be subject to suspension and/or expulsion (see Section IX:D below).

Summary of Civil and Criminal Penalties for Violation of Federal Copyright Laws

Copyright infringement is the act of exercising, without permission or legal authority, one or more of the exclusive rights granted to the copyright owner under section 106 of the Copyright Act (Title 17 of the United States Code). These rights include the right to reproduce or distribute a copyrighted work. In the file-sharing context, downloading or uploading substantial parts of a copyrighted work without authority constitutes an infringement. Penalties for copyright infringement include civil and criminal penalties. In general, anyone found liable for civil copyright infringement may be ordered to pay either actual damages or "statutory" damages affixed at not less than $750 and not more than $30,000 per work infringed. For "willful" infringement, a court may award up to $150,000 per work infringed. A court can, in its discretion, also assess costs and attorneys' fees. For details, see Title 17, United States Code, Sections 504, 505. Willful copyright infringement can also result in criminal penalties, including imprisonment of up to five years and fines of up to $250,000 per offense. For more information, please see the website of the U.S. Copyright Office (also see https://www.copyright.gov/title17/). Please note the recent guidance from the U.S. Copyright Office regarding AI generated content.

Students who need access to copyrighted material for school-related purposes should be in touch with AJR's Librarian (librarian@ajr.edu) for information regarding legal ways of accessing materials.

O. Incompletes

The accumulation of incompletes can undermine academic progress, impact Federal Student Aid, and place added stress on one's personal life. To minimize this practice at the Academy, the following policies will apply:

1) Students must speak to the instructor, be granted an Incomplete, and submit an Incomplete Request Form signed by the student, the instructor, and the Academic Dean to the Administrative Office by the last day of the trimester.
2) Incompletes from the Fall trimester must be handed in by May 1st of the same academic year. Incompletes from the Spring trimester must be handed in by September 1st of the same calendar year. Incompletes from the Summer trimester must be handed in by January 1st of the same academic year. These dates will be adjusted accordingly if they fall on a weekend or Jewish

holiday. Instructors may decline to grade assignments submitted after these dates or may charge the Incomplete Extension Fee.

3) In order to remove the Incomplete grade, satisfactory work must be submitted directly to the instructor with a copy sent to the Registrar (lripps@ajr.edu) and the Assistant Academic Dean (mgoldstone@ajr.edu).
4) If these procedures are not followed or the work is not handed in on time, students will receive a grade of FI for the course, indicating that the student has not passed the class due to incomplete work.
5) Whenever the student has extenuating circumstances, the student may be granted an extension by the Academic Dean. In the event an extension is granted, there may be an Incomplete Extension Fee of $75 per paper or exam to be graded.
6) If no incompletes are to be granted in a course, instructors must state this in writing on their syllabi at the beginning of the trimester, such as when an adjunct instructor will only be at the Academy for one trimester.
7) It is important to note that incompletes impact a student's rate of course completion and, correspondingly, their Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). Incompletes may therefore impact a student's eligibility for Federal Student Aid. Students with Federal Student Aid who are considering taking an incomplete should review AJR's SAP Policy and consult with one of the academic deans as well as the Director of Financial Aid (Rabbi David Cavill). It is the responsibility of the student to discuss this issue with an academic dean prior to applying for an incomplete as the deans may not be aware of which students have Federal Student Aid.

Please note that in order to facilitate timely completion of incompletes, AJR only preserves course recordings for one trimester following the term in which the course occurred (e.g., Spring course recordings are only saved through the end of the summer term).

P. Maintain Matriculation and Leave of Absence

For students who need to take time off from AJR courses there are two categories, we urge you to speak with the Academic Dean or Assistant Academic Dean to clarify which of these categories best addresses your needs.

Matriculated students who have completed coursework, are only auditing courses, or who are taking a term off from courses while working on other curricular requirements, must register for "Maintain Matriculation." Students who wish to continue in Maintain Matriculation status for more than two consecutive trimesters must receive permission from the Academic Dean prior to enrolling with Maintain Matriculation for a third term. If a student does not seek and receive permission from the Academic Dean for a third term of Maintain Matriculation then they are liable to be considered withdrawn after the second term of Maintain Matriculation. Please note that all ordination students on Maintain Matriculation status are required to attend the Gatherings.

Students who need to take a trimester or more entirely away from AJR may apply for an approved Leave of Absence. In keeping with Federal Student Aid rules, to obtain an approved Leave of Absence students must submit a written, signed, and dated request to the Academic Dean, including details about the reason for the requested leave of absence, prior to beginning the Leave of Absence. If unforeseen circumstances prevent a student from providing a prior written request, the Academic Dean may choose to grant the Leave of Absence and collect the formal request at a later time. Please note that students may be on Leave of Absence status for a maximum of 180 days within a 12 month period, beginning on the first day of their Leave of Absence. Any student who does not return to actively completing their program after their approved Leave of Absence will be considered withdrawn from their program. Students on an approved Leave of Absence are not eligible for AJR or federal student aid. Also please note that because of the criteria that must be met for a Leave of Absence to be an approved Leave of Absence, term-based schools like AJR can grant Leaves of Absence that meet the

Department of Education's criteria for an approved Leave of Absence in a very limited number of cases (see FSA Handbook Vol 5).

Students who have not registered for an upcoming trimester (including the summer term), as an active student (including payment of the registration fee), for Maintain Matriculation (including payment of the applicable fee), or for a Leave of Absence, by the last day of the term will be automatically withdrawn from the program as of the last day of the term (see "Withdrawal from AJR" below).

Q. Withdrawal from AJR

Students who wish to withdraw from AJR should write a letter to the Academic Dean or the AJR office stating that they are withdrawing from their AJR program. If a student does not formally indicate intention of withdrawing, then AJR will determine the date on which the student began the withdrawal process. As all AJR instructors are required to take attendance, the beginning of the withdrawal process is usually based upon the date AJR became aware that the student ceased attending classes (i.e., the date of the last session attended). However, if a student attended an official AJR event after the last class session they attended, the date of the official AJR event will serve as their date of withdrawal.

Returning students who do not register for classes or Maintain Matriculation for any trimester (including the summer trimester), and who have not received an approved Leave of Absence, will be considered withdrawn as of the end of the last trimester in which they took classes or registered for Maintain Matriculation. The end of the trimester for any given term is 11:59 pm of the final day on which classes meet. Newly admitted students who officially accept their place in one of AJR's programs but do not register for classes or Maintain Matriculation for the first term following their acceptance of admission will be considered withdrawn from AJR at the end of the add/drop period of that term.

Matriculated students in one of AJR's ordination programs may not simultaneously be matriculated in an ordination program at another institution in pursuit of the same degree (e.g., one may not be enrolled in the rabbinical program at another institution while pursuing rabbinical ordination at AJR, but they may be enrolled in a cantorial program at another institution while pursuing rabbinical ordination at AJR). If a student is in the process of withdrawing from another institution while matriculating at AJR, they may be matriculated at AJR for no more than 30 days before needing to be officially withdrawn from the other institution. If an AJR ordination student matriculates into an ordination program at a different institution in pursuit of the same degree, then they are officially considered withdrawn from AJR as of the date upon which they matriculated into the other institution. Students may simultaneously be enrolled in AJR's Master's Program and an ordination program at another institution and AJR ordination students may be enrolled in Master's Programs at the other institutions while pursuing ordination at AJR.

For information regarding AJR refunds, see below Section X:H.

R. Readmission to AJR

Should a student who withdraws from the program want to resume studies within five years of the end of their prior matriculation, they must submit a letter to the Academic Dean requesting readmission to the school. Reapplication to AJR includes writing an essay explaining what the student has been doing since their withdrawal from AJR, developments in their theology, and reasons for wanting to continue their studies. This should be accompanied by two letters of reference. This application will be evaluated by an admissions committee. Prior matriculation is no guarantee of readmission. Readmitted students are subject to the program requirements at the time of readmission. After five years from the end of their prior matriculation students must complete an

entirely new application packet, including letters of reference and transcripts (if they are no longer on file). Psychosocial evaluations are only valid for 3 years from the date on which they were conducted.

S. Drugs and Alcohol Policy

The unlawful possession, use, or distribution of drugs and alcohol by students on the school's property or as part of the school's activities is prohibited and may result in monetary fines and imprisonment. For New York State sanctions regarding the possession or sale of drugs, see here. For federal laws relevant to controlled substances, see here. For AJR sanctions concerning students who violate AJR's drug and alcohol policy, see Section IX:D below.

Students are permitted to bring and consume alcohol in moderation at AJR Gatherings provided they do not become inebriated and that it does not lead to inappropriate activity.

For information regarding the health risks of substance use disorder, see the Department of Justice's Drug Enforcement Administration's resource on Drugs of Abuse. Resources for dealing with substance use disorder can be found here.

AJR will annually distribute to all students and employees a written statement containing several pieces of information related to the use of drugs and alcohol including:

- A statement of AJR's standards of conduct that prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees on the institution's property or as part of any of the institution's activities;
- A description of applicable legal sanctions under state, local, and federal law
- A description of the health risks associated with the use of drugs and alcohol
- A description of available counseling, treatment, rehabilitation, or re-entry programs that are available to AJR students
- A clear statement that AJR will impose sanctions for violation of our standards of conduct and a description of the sanctions

The health and safety of every student at the Academy for Jewish Religion (AJR) is of utmost importance. AJR recognizes that students who have been drinking and/or using drugs (whether such use is voluntary or involuntary) at the time that violence, including but not limited to domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or sexual assault occurs may be hesitant to report such incidents due to fear of potential consequences for their own conduct. AJR strongly encourages students to report domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or sexual assault to institution officials. A bystander acting in good faith or a reporting individual acting in good faith that discloses any incident of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or sexual assault to AJR's officials or law enforcement will not be subject to AJR's code of conduct action for violations of alcohol and/or drug use policies occurring at or near the time of the commission of the domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or sexual assault.

AJR has established the Rabbi Gabriel Kirshner *z"l* Wellness Fund, which is intended to provide limited financial support for students seeking initial counseling consultation. Students in need of drug and or alcohol counseling should contact AJR's Dean of Student Life (mkasper@ajr.edu) regarding their eligibility for support from this fund.

T. Student Educational Records and Information

Transcripts

Official transcripts are available to students for $5 per transcript. If the transcript is being used to apply for a program at another institution, AJR will send the transcript directly to the institution and not to student. Students may request a personal copy of official transcripts for private use (i.e., not for applying for a program). Students interested in obtaining an official transcript should complete a Transcript Request Form and submit it to Linda Ripps (Lripps@ajr.edu).

Unofficial transcripts are available for free. Currently matriculated students have access to unofficial transcripts through Populi. Gesher students, former students who have withdrawn, and alumni should write to Linda Ripps (Lripps@ajr.edu) for access to an unofficial transcript.

AJR uses Populi, an academic software program for student information and course management. Students use Populi including registration, and access to course syllabi and files. On Populi they can view their transcript. Grades and transcripts are maintained after graduation/ordination indefinitely.

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords eligible students certain rights with respect to their education records.

> An "eligible student" under FERPA is a student who is 18 years of age or older or who attends a postsecondary institution at any age.
> "Education records" under FERPA include, but are not limited to grades, transcripts, class lists, student course schedules, student financial information, and student discipline files.

These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Academy receives a request for access (most such information is immediately available to students through their Populi login). A student should submit to the Senior Director of Administration a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. AJR will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

   A student who wishes to ask AJR to amend a record should write the Senior Director of Administration, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed.

   If AJR decides not to amend the record as requested, AJR will notify the student in writing of the decision and the student's right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before AJR discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

AJR discloses education records without a student's prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests.

The AJR administration maintains three tiers with respect to administrative access of student educational information without express student consent:

1. Tier 1: All AJR administrators, with the exception of the Librarian, have access to student transcript and coursework related-information in AJR's student learning management system, Populi.
2. Tier 2: Select AJR administrators, including the Academic Dean, the Dean of Student Life, the Assistant Academic Dean, the Dean of Admissions, the Director of Spiritual Education, the Senior Director of Administration, the Bursar/Registrar, and the Administrative Assistant, have access to current student physical files and digital files.
3. Tier 3: Only the Dean of Admissions (during the admissions process), the Academic Dean, the Senior Director of Administration, and the Dean of Student Life have access to sensitive student files including psychosocial evaluations and related materials.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Academy to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

   Student Privacy Policy Office
   U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202

FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from students' education records, without consent of the student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the student, FERPA regulations require the institution to record the disclosure. Eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A postsecondary institution may disclose personally identifiable information from the education records without obtaining prior written consent of the student:

- To other school officials, including teachers, within AJR whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions.
- To officials of another school where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as a State postsecondary authority that is responsible for supervising the university's State-supported education programs. Disclosures under this provision may be made in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State- supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf.
- To US military personnel in accordance with the Solomon Amendment.
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions.
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes.

- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- Information the school has designated as "directory information." Student names, email addresses, phone numbers, and addresses are designated as directory information and students grant permission for this information to be shared within the AJR student community in a form completed during registration.
- To a victim of an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or a non-forcible sex offense. The disclosure may only include the final results of the disciplinary proceeding with respect to that alleged crime or offense, regardless of the finding.
- To the general public, the final results of a disciplinary proceeding, if the school determines the student is an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or non-forcible sex offense and the student has committed a violation of the school's rules or policies with respect to the allegation made against him or her.

Students retain the right to provide consent for the disclosure of their educational information. In order to request the release of student information, the student must provide a signed and dated written consent specifying the records that may be disclosed, the purpose of the disclosure, and the party or class of parities to whom the disclosure may be made. The consent may be signed in electronic format provided the format can be used to clearly identify and authenticate that he student is the source of the electronic consent and that the student approves of the information contained in the electronic consent. Except for documents that students have already officially relinquished their right to access (such as psychosocial evaluations), students may request copies of records that are disclosed.

For more information regarding FERPA, please see https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/opepd/sppo/index.html.

U. Information Security Program

As required by the Code of Federal Regulations, AJR maintains an Information Security Program, which is defined as "the administrative, technical, or physical safeguards you use to access, collect, distribute, process, protect, store, use, transmit, dispose of, or otherwise handle customer information" (§ 314.2c). AJR ensures the security of physical files and documents through the use of fireproof locked cabinets and the security of digital information through the use of secure virtual environments – shared files protected and hosted by Rekall Technologies and student educational information protected and hosted by Populi.

AJR's Designated Coordinator for this Information Security Program is Suli Fassler, Senior Director of Administration, who oversees physical storage of information as well as information contained in Populi and information hosted by Rekall Technologies (including files, email, and other digital information).

AJR strives to identify foreseeable internal and external risks to student and employee information through such means as: Training for the Designated Coordinators in the use of the virtual environments, prompt communication with the companies that host our secure information whenever a question of security or the location of information arises, and the periodic assessment of our information hosting companies to ensure that they continue to provide sufficient security for information, as specified in our contracts with these service providers. AJR's most recent cybersecurity assessment was conducted in December 2021 and several recommendations were subsequently implemented. The AJR staff also engaged in cybersecurity training in May 2022.

For questions or concerns regarding AJR's Information Security Program, please contact sfassler@ajr.edu to direct your query.

V. Vaccinations

As per New York State requirements, AJR requires that if asked, students provide proof of MMR immunization at 1+ years of age or older, and a 2nd dose vaccine 28 days after 1st dose (or students may get the vaccine at their doctor's office, providing documentation and proof of their next appointment for the 2nd MMR dose 28 days after the first dose). AJR also requires matriculating students to provide proof of Meningococcal Meningitis immunization or a signed declination form.

AJR reserves the right to request documentation of other vaccinations, including for Covid-19, that it deems relevant to the health and safety of its student body. AJR also reserves the right to institute policies regarding the vaccination status of students coming to campus or attending AJR in-person events.

W. Locked Transcripts

When a person's transcript is "locked" in Populi they will be unable to view their transcript and AJR will not release copies of the transcript until the transcript becomes unlocked. Thus, students and alumni who wish to have a copy of their transcript sent to another institution or party must ensure that their transcript is unlocked in order for the transcript to be released.

There are several major reasons why a person's transcript will be locked, including:

- Failure to complete the required Information Literacy Online Module by the end of their first trimester as a matriculated student (see above, Section IV:B).
- Failure to make timely payments on outstanding AJR financial obligations or when a student leaves AJR with an open balance.
- If a student is placed on academic probation (see Section IX:D).

X. AJR Student Location Policy

In compliance with USDE 34 CFR § 668.43 and NC-SARA requirements, AJR must determine the location of all of its students. Please note that "location" in this context refers to where students are physically located when taking courses at AJR and is not legal residency (i.e., where students pay taxes).

AJR records and updates student location information during their initial enrollment at AJR and upon receipt of a formal notification from a student of change of location (see below).

Student location includes a local address, US state (for those in the United States), Canadian provinces or territories (for those in Canada) or city and country (for those outside of North America). This information is stored in AJR's Learning Management System, Populi, in the "Info" tab for each student.

Change of Location Notification

If an American student is moving to a new location in a different US state, they are legally required to notify AJR. Formal notification must be within 14 days of the move and should be addressed to AJR's Registrar/Bursar, Linda Ripps (lripps@ajr.edu). Notifications of the relocation must include the new address, including US state (if applicable). If a student is moving to a new location that is not within a different US state, AJR requires the student to notify AJR of the move within 30 days.

Temporary Relocation

For students who are temporarily in a different location, such as for military deployment, travel, or otherwise, for less than 3 months, this does not qualify as relocating and the student does not need to inform AJR. When a student will be relocating for 3 months or more, they should notify AJR according to the Change of Location Notification requirements.

Professional Licensure

One of the reasons for the legal requirement of notifying AJR of an interstate move for those living in the United States is to ensure that students are aware of the different professional licensure requirements in different states. As none of AJR's degrees lead to professional licensure, this is not directly relevant and AJR does not need to notify students of how an interstate change in location would impact their degree.

Y. AJR Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

We are living in a rapidly evolving technological landscape. Artificial intelligence (AI) tools and technologies are proliferating at an incredible rate, are increasingly capable of more complex and creative tasks, and are being integrated into basic tools in ways that standardize and sometimes obscure their use.

What follows is a brief overview of AJR's AI policy. For more details you can view AJR's complete AI Policy here.

AJR's AI Policy is guided by three underlying principles: Integrity, transparency, and privacy.

AI should be used to enhance and further our learning rather than simply to expedite the process of producing a product. Before even considering using AI technologies, one should have basic AI literacy, including a foundational understanding of what AI is capable of and how it works, as well as how different prompts impact the resulting product.

Integrity

> Unless explicitly permitted or required by an instructor in writing, AJR's position is that AI should only be used for supportive, and not creative, purposes – and if the use of AI is prohibited by an instructor, then it should not be employed at all. It is assumed that AI usage is prohibited for all oral or written examinations unless explicitly stated otherwise by the instructor. If an instructor permits the use of AI for assignments, AJR expects that it should be used to help refine existing writing without contributing new ideas or framings to the student's work and that students will closely review and verify the product that is produced by the AI tool. The line between enhancing and creating is not always clear. For further clarification and examples see the full AI Policy.

Transparency

In any situation in which a student uses AI technologies, they should provide the instructor or advisor with the following information prior to, or at the time of, submitting an assignment:

- What AI tool was used
- A brief statement of how the student understands the use
- The prompt(s) provided to the AI tool as well as any original text provided by the student to the AI tool
- For assignments that contain citations or a bibliography, students should follow the emerging guidance from standard citation formats for how to reference this technology (e.g., the guidance from the Chicago Manual of Style, MLA format, and APA format).

Even if AI technology was employed in the planning process of an assignment, and was not directly involved in the production of the final product, students should convey this information to the instructor. Even if instructors do not require students to provide documentation of their usage of AI, students should retain this documentation in the event that the AJR administration requests this documentation.

Privacy

Just as is the case with recordings, transcriptions of course sessions should not be shared beyond those who were in a course. For particularly sensitive courses, such as Counseling, which are not recorded, AJR may disable transcriptions. While this can negatively impact accessibility, in these contexts we prioritize student privacy in creating a safe space in which students are comfortable sharing highly personal information. If this is a significant accessibility concern, please be in touch with the AJR administration to discuss ways to facilitate accessibility.

Consequences for Failing to Adhere to This Policy

The consequences for violating this policy, even unintentionally, may result in disciplinary actions, including but not limited to, failure of an assignment or course, academic probation, suspension, and/or expulsion from AJR. For details please see the full AI Policy.

V. Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy and Violent Crimes

The Academy presents information regarding discrimination to its students, together with information on harassment, bias-related crime prevention including bias-related crimes (including Hate Crimes, under Article 485 of the NY Penal Law), sexual assault and safety during the academic year through annual emails and in its programming. Students are also alerted about events that affect their security and the security of the community when the need arises. Any member of the community may obtain additional information from the CEO / Academic Dean or the Dean of Student Life.

The full AJR policy on Sexual Harassment can be found as an appendix to this Catalog and on the website.

A. Affirmative Consent to Sexual Activity

Affirmative consent is a knowing, voluntary, and mutual decision among all participants to engage in sexual activity. Consent can be given by words or actions, as long as those words or actions create clear permission regarding willingness to engage in the sexual activity. Silence or lack of resistance, in and of itself, does not demonstrate consent. The definition of consent does not vary based upon a participant's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

The following principles reflect guidance for the AJR community:

1. Consent to any sexual act or prior consensual sexual activity between or with any party does not necessarily constitute consent to any other sexual act.
2. Consent is required regardless of whether the person initiating the act is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.
3. Consent may be initially given but withdrawn at any time.
4. Consent cannot be given when a person is incapacitated, which occurs when an individual lacks the ability to knowingly choose to participate in sexual activity. Incapacitation may be caused by the lack of consciousness or being asleep, being involuntarily restrained, or if an individual otherwise cannot consent. Depending on the degree of intoxication, someone who is under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or other intoxicants may be incapacitated and therefore unable to consent.
5. Consent cannot be given when it is the result of any coercion, intimidation, force, or threat of harm.
6. When consent is withdrawn or can no longer be given, sexual activity must stop.

B. Bullying

At the Academy, we are mindful of the Torah's admonition to "*treat your fellow human being as yourself*". This sets the tone for our interactions with each other. Acts of harassment or bullying are prohibited. Everyone is expected to show civil behaviors towards one another as we interact. Threats, intimidation, ridicule or hostile remarks are out of place in our community. Some examples of bullying behavior are:

- Abusive and offensive language
- Insults
- Teasing
- Spreading rumor and innuendo
- Unreasonable criticism
- Trivializing of work and achievements
- Excessive demands
- Setting impossible deadlines

We expect all to strive for conflict resolution by specifically describing concerns, outlining expectations, providing pathways for remedies and helping all to reach our potential.

Our community is characterized by encouragement, goal setting and group accomplishments through collaboration and teamwork. We are dedicated to continuous improvement, and attempt to function together using accepted principles and values that guide our work. Change is nurtured. Discussions always help things run better. We are proud of our pluralism, and we are committed to helping each other.

Positive changes happen when we are courteous, professional and respectful. We share experiences and develop trust as we progress. We honor our heritage by working each day together respectfully.

C. Violent Crimes

AJR prohibits the crimes of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, as well as other violent crimes. Information about crimes committed in AJR's Clery geography can be found in our most recent Annual Security Report.

Transcript Notations

For crimes of violence, including, but not limited to sexual violence, defined as crimes that meet the reporting requirements pursuant to the federal Clery Act established in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(1)(F)(i)(I)-(VIII), AJR shall make a notation on the transcript of students found responsible after a conduct process that they were "suspended after a finding of responsibility for a code of conduct violation" or "expelled after a finding of responsibility for a code of conduct violation." For the respondent who withdraws from AJR while such conduct charges are pending, and declines to complete the disciplinary process, AJR shall make a notation on the transcript of such students that they "withdrew with conduct charges pending."

A suspended student with a transcript notation who wishes to appeal the notation must send a signed and dated letter to the Academic Dean explaining the reason for the request. Notations for students who are expelled are not subject to appeal. If an appeal from a student who was suspended is approved, the notation shall not be removed prior to one year after the conclusion of the suspension. If a finding of responsibility is vacated for any reason, any such transcript notation shall be removed.

VI. Students' Bill of Rights

All students have the right to:

1. Make a report to local law enforcement and/or state police;

2. Have disclosures of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault treated seriously;

3. Make a decision about whether or not to disclose a crime or violation and participate in the judicial or conduct process and/or criminal justice process free from pressure by the institution; (in implementing this decision, students may without pressure from the Academy, notify proper law enforcement authorities, including local police; may be assisted by campus authorities in notifying law enforcement authorities if the victim so chooses; or may decline to notify such authorities.)

4. Participate in a process that is fair, impartial, and provides adequate notice and a meaningful opportunity to be heard;

5. Be treated with dignity and to receive from the institution courteous, fair, and respectful health care and counseling services, where available;

6. Be free from any suggestion that the reporting individual is at fault when these crimes and violations are committed, or should have acted in a different manner to avoid such crimes or violations;

7. Describe the incident to as few institution representatives as practicable and not be required to unnecessarily repeat a description of the incident;

8. Be protected from retaliation by the institution, any student, the accused and/or the respondent, and/or their friends, family and acquaintances within the jurisdiction of the institution;

9. Access to at least one level of appeal of a determination;

10. Be accompanied by an advisor of choice who may assist and advise a reporting individual, accused, or respondent throughout the judicial or conduct process including during all meetings and hearings related to such process; and

11. Exercise civil rights and practice of religion without interference by the investigative, criminal justice, or judicial or conduct process of the institution.

VII. Confidentiality in Title IX

For the complete policy regarding harassment, see the appendix at the end of this Catalog or the AJR website.

If an individual discloses an incident to an Academy's Title IX Coordinator, or their deputy, who is responsible for responding to or reporting domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or sexual assault, but wishes to maintain confidentiality, or does not consent to the Academy's request to initiate an investigation, the Title IX Coordinator will weigh the request against the Academy's obligation to provide a safe, non-discriminatory environment for all members of its community.

Academy officers and employees who cannot guarantee confidentiality will maintain privacy to the greatest extent possible. The information provided to a non-confidential resource will be relayed only as necessary for the Title IX Coordinator to investigate and/or seek a resolution.

The Academy may anonymously disclose information on relevant confidential hotlines provided by New York state agencies and not-for-profit entities; information in an anonymized manner regarding institutional crime reporting such as reports of certain crimes that are required to be included in the Academy's annual security report pursuant to the Clery Act; information that the Academy is obligated to issue timely warnings of crimes enumerated in the Clery Act, that represent a serious or continuing threat to students and employees, when the warning itself could potentially identify the reporting individual, and other reports mandated by law.

When the Academy determines that an investigation is required, it will notify those individuals and take immediate action as necessary to protect and assist them. The Academy will attempt to seek consent from those individuals prior to conducting an investigation. Declining to consent to an investigation shall be honored unless the Academy determines in good faith that failure to investigate does not adequately mitigate a potential risk of harm to the reporting individual or other members of its community. Honoring such a request may limit the Academy's ability to meaningfully investigate and pursue a conduct action against an accused individual.

VIII. Complaints

AJR Complaint Procedures

Grade or Course Complaint

For a complaint related to a grade or an academic-related concern from a course students should notify the administration and speak directly with the relevant faculty member within 30 days of completing the course. If the issue cannot be resolved directly with the faculty member, then the student should reach out to one of the Deans. The Dean may discuss the issue with the faculty member for further clarification and will respond to the student within one week (7 days) to indicate subsequent steps or a potential resolution.

Other (Non-Harassment) Informal Complaints

Informal complaints that are not about a grade or academically-related concern from a course, nor related to a potential case of harassment, should be addressed directly to one of the Deans. Informal complaints may be related orally or in writing. The Dean will respond to the student within one week (7 days) to indicate subsequent steps or a potential resolution.

Harassment Complaints

See the "Sexual Harassment Complaints" section below.

Complaints Regarding Suspension or Expulsion

Students may file complaints through formal and informal procedures. No action will be taken against any student filing complaints. A student has the right to formally appeal major decisions, that is, suspension or expulsion, to the Presidential Council. The decision of the Presidential Council shall be binding and final in all matters. The Presidential Council is an ad hoc committee convened by the CEO and shall include at least one member of the Board and one member of the full-time faculty.

1. A student shall advise the Senior Administration in writing of intent to make an appeal to the Presidential Council. It shall be the responsibility of the Administration to schedule a meeting of the Presidential Council.
2. The student shall submit in writing an account of the circumstances and the grounds upon which an action by the Presidential Council is requested. The CEO shall submit in writing a statement of the position of the Administration. One written addition may be presented by each party. Copies of all written submissions shall be sent to the other party.
3. There shall be no discussion of the issues with any member of the Presidential Council, other than by means of these written submissions and at the meeting of the Council. The student's file shall be available to the Presidential Council.
4. Three members of the Presidential Council shall be a quorum for the purpose of hearing an appeal. The Presidential Council shall meet on Zoom unless all parties prefer to meet at the premises of AJR.
5. The student may be accompanied by a friend or family member; either party may be represented by an advocate.
6. The case of the student shall be presented first, followed by the Administration's case. Both may present testimony.
7. All matter concerning the conduct of the Appeal, the admissibility of any testimony, the length of submissions, and the personal conduct of all parties shall be at the sole discretion of the presiding member of the Presidential Council.
8. The decision of the Presidential Council shall be communicated within twenty-one days of the Appeal. There shall be no obligation upon the Presidential Council to give reasons or explanation of their decision, although they may do so.
9. All matters before the Presidential Council shall be regarded as confidential and shall not be publicly discussed.

Sexual Harassment Complaints

AJR's harassment complaint form can be found as an appendix to this Catalog.

Preventing sexual misconduct is everyone's responsibility. The Academy cannot prevent or remedy sexual misconduct unless it knows about it. Any employee, student, paid or unpaid intern or applicant for employment or admission who has been subjected to behavior that may constitute sexual harassment is encouraged to report such behavior to a Title IX Coordinator. If it is the Title IX Coordinator or one of those listed herein who is alleged to be engaged in harassing behavior, any member of the Administration may be contacted and a complaint may be filed with them.

Complaints of sexual misconduct may be made verbally or in writing. All employees and students are encouraged to use the complaint form supplied by the Academy's Academic Dean or other Administrator. Employees who are reporting sexual harassment on behalf of another should use the complaint form and note that it is on another employee's or student's behalf.

Employees, paid or unpaid interns or applicants for employment or admission who believe they have been a target of sexual harassment may also seek assistance in other available forums.

All supervisors and managers or Academy Administrators who receive a complaint or information about suspected sexual harassment, observe what may be sexually harassing behavior or for any reason suspect that sexual harassment is occurring, are required to report such suspected sexual harassment to the Academy's Title IX Coordinators.

In addition to being subject to discipline if they engaged in sexually harassing conduct themselves, supervisors and managers and Administrators will be subject to discipline for failing to report suspected sexual harassment or otherwise knowingly allowing sexual harassment to continue. Supervisors and managers and Administrators will also be subject to discipline for engaging in any retaliation.

Title IX Coordinators

The individuals identified below have been designated as the Academy's Title IX coordinators. Title IX Coordinators are specially trained to work with individuals who report or are accused of sexual misconduct and have knowledge of resources, services, and options available in such circumstances. Complaints of sexual misconduct may be reported to the Academy's Title IX coordinators at any time in-person, by mail, email or telephone.

Contact: Dr. Matthew Goldstone
Location: 28 Wells Ave, Yonkers NY 10701
Phone: (914) 709-4035
Email: mgoldstone@ajr.edu

Contact: Cantor Michael Kasper
Location: 28 Wells Ave, Yonkers NY 10701
Phone: (914) 709-4029
Email: Mkasper@ajr.edu

Contact: Rabbi Beth Kramer-Mazer
Location: 28 Wells Ave, Yonkers NY 10701
Phone: (914) 709-4029
Email: bkramermazer@ajr.edu

The Title IX Coordinator will offer supportive measures, as appropriate, to the person who allegedly suffered misconduct and the person alleged to have committed the misconduct. Supportive measures are non-disciplinary, non-punitive services offered by the Academy, without fee or charge. These measures are available before or after the filing of a formal complaint and even where no formal complaint is filed. Supportive measures serve to protect the safety of all parties, protect the safety of the Academy's educational environment, or deter sexual misconduct all the while ensuring equal access to education programs and activities, without unreasonably burdening any of the parties.

Complaint and Investigation of Sexual Harassment

The individual who is the alleged victim of sexual misconduct is referred to as the "complainant." The individual alleged to have committed the act complained of in violation of policy is referred to as the "respondent."

All complaints or information about sexual harassment will be investigated, however, a complainant's wishes against the initiation of an investigation will be respected unless it is determined that the need for an investigation outweighs the complainant's wishes and is reasonable under the known circumstances. Further, depending on the circumstances of the matter, an informal resolution process may be an option.

An investigation of any complaint, information or knowledge of suspected sexual harassment will be prompt and thorough and will commence immediately and be completed as soon as possible. All persons involved, including complainants, witnesses and alleged harassers will be treated equitably and accorded due process, as outlined below, to protect their rights to a fair and impartial investigation. Any employee or student may be required to cooperate as needed in an investigation of suspected sexual harassment.

Until the grievance process is completed and a determination is made, responsibility for the alleged misconduct will not be presumed, and the Academy will not impose disciplinary actions. The Academy will not tolerate retaliation against individual who file complaints, support another's complaint or participate in an investigation regarding a violation of this policy.

While the grievance process may vary from case to case, when a formal complaint is filed, the process will generally consist of the following actions:*

- Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Academy will conduct a preliminary review of the allegations, and take any interim actions (e.g., instructing the respondent to refrain from communications with the complainant) within thirty (30) calendar days, as appropriate. If the complaint is verbal, the individual will be encouraged to complete the "Complaint Form" in writing. If he or she refuses, the Academy will prepare a Complaint Form based on the verbal reporting. The Academy will designate neutral decision-maker(s), who are not the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator, to facilitate the grievance process.
- Prior to the commencement of an investigation, the parties involved will be notified in writing of the following, to the extent such information is known: the identities of the parties involved in the incident, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident. Further, the parties may elect to have an advisor of their choice. Liability will not be assigned until the conclusion of the investigation and a determination is formed.
- If documents, emails or phone records are relevant to the investigation, steps will be taken to obtain and preserve them. Requests for and review of all relevant documents, including all electronic communications will be conducted.
- Each party will have the right to present their case. This includes equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses and to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation.
- At the conclusion of the investigation, a report summarizing the investigation (such as a letter, memo or email), which contains the following will be created and distributed to the parties:
- A list of relevant documents and evidence reviewed, along with a detailed summary thereof;
- A list of names of those interviewed, along with a detailed summary of their statements;
- A timeline of events; and
- A summary of prior relevant incidents, reported or unreported.

- A live hearing will be held within six (6) weeks of the distribution of the report during which each party may examine the other party and any witnesses and follow-up with a cross-examination before e decision-maker(s). Either party may request that the other party be separated in a different room during the hearing.
- The decision-maker(s) will conduct an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence. At the conclusion of the hearing, a determination as to responsibility will be issued within thirty (30) calendar days of the conclusion of the hearing. The determination will include a summary of the allegations and the procedures undertaken, findings of fact supporting the determination, a statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation. The complainant and respondent will be notified of the final determination.
- Remedial measures, disciplinary actions, and/or sanctions will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The assessment will be based on several factors, including, but not limited to, the severity of the conduct and any prior violations of the policy.
- The complainant may, at any time during the investigation or hearing, dismiss the complaint or withdraw any allegations therein by notifying the Academy in writing. Moreover, the Academy may, upon a complete review of the facts and evidence presented, dismiss the complaint, or certain allegations, if it determines that the alleged conduct does not constitute sexual harassment. Written notice of the dismissal and reason(s) therefor will be promptly sent to both parties.

* The timeline of the process set forth herein is subject to change. The designated time periods assume that none of the events take place during one of the two major Jewish holiday seasons and that there are no extenuating circumstances affecting the parties, their witnesses, or the responsible Title IX Coordinator(s).

Appeals

Both the complainant and the respondent are entitled to appeal the determination.

The appeal must be made within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the written notification of the determination. An appeal must be in writing and specify the basis for the appeal. The grounds for appeal are as follows:

1. Procedural errors within the investigation or hearing may have substantially affected the fairness of the process;
2. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time of the investigation or hearing is discovered and could materially affect the outcome; or
3. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against the complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

Both parties will be provided with a reasonable, equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the determination. Upon conclusion of the appeals process, the Academy will issue a decision describing the result of the appeal and both parties will be notified of the decision.

Retaliation

Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual misconduct, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege constitutes retaliation.

Retaliation is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. Unlawful retaliation can be any action that could discourage an individual from coming forward to make or support a sexual harassment claim. An adverse action need not be job-related or study related or occur outside the Academy to constitute unlawful retaliation (e.g., threats of physical violence outside of work or study hours).

The New York State Human Rights Law protects any individual who has engaged in "protected activity." Protected activity occurs when a person has:

- made a complaint of sexual harassment, either internally or with any anti-discrimination agency;
- testified or assisted in a proceeding involving sexual harassment under the Human Rights Law or other anti-discrimination law;
- opposed sexual harassment by making a verbal or informal complaint to management, or by simply informing a supervisor or manager of harassment or an Academy Administrator;
- reported that another employee or student has been sexually harassed; or
- encouraged a fellow employee or student to report harassment.

Even if the alleged harassment does not turn out to rise to the level of a violation of law, the individual is protected from retaliation if the person had a good faith belief that the practices were unlawful. However, this provision is not intended to protect persons making intentionally false charges of harassment.

Retaliatory conduct is strictly prohibited and should be reported to the Academy. All employees, paid or unpaid interns, or students or non-employees working or studying in the Academy who believe they have been subject to such retaliation should inform their supervisor, manager, or the CEO/Academic Dean or the Dean of Student Life. Individuals who are found to have engaged in retaliation are subject to disciplinary action.

Privacy

The Academy understands that privacy maintains the integrity of the investigation, protects the interests of the parties involved, and precludes retaliatory or defamatory acts. For those reasons, the Academy will protect the identity of persons involved and maintain privacy of all complaints and investigations to the extent reasonably possible, except as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Title IX, or other applicable laws. Any written documentation and associated records in connection with the complaint and grievance process will be kept in a secure and confidential location. Where necessary, information pertaining to the complaint will be disclosed on a need-to-know basis.

SARA and NYSED Complaint Procedures

Within New York State

For students taking courses online from within New York State, or taking courses in-person at AJR, information about filing a complaint with NYSED can be found here. Prior to filing a complaint with NYSED students should first try to resolve the complaint directly with AJR (see "AJR Complaint Procedures" above).

Outside of New York State

For all types of complaints related to distance education, the first course of action must be to try to resolve the complaint directly with AJR (see "AJR Complaint Procedures" above). If a student finds the resolution offered by AJR to be unsatisfactory, the student may appeal the institutional decision to the SARA State Portal Entity in New

York State within two years of the incident about which the complaint is made. More information about the SARA complaint process can be found here.

The SARA complaint process is as follows:

1. Students must first attempt to resolve their complaint using internal administrative procedures offered by the SARA participating institution (see "AJR Complaint Procedures" above).
2. If not satisfied with the result of the institution's complaint process, the student may file an appeal with the SARA State Portal Entity in New York State – see the NYSED SARA Complaints Process page. Complainants should include documentation of the institution's complaint determination. The time limit for filing a SARA complaint is two years from the incident in question. Complaints about grades and student conduct cannot be heard under SARA policies.
3. In reviewing a student complaint under SARA, the Office of College and University Evaluation (OCUE) may consult with other offices and agencies as appropriate and will share the complaint and supporting documentation with the institution involved. OCUE must report a SARA complaint to the student's home State Portal Entity.

The State Portal Entity Contact for AJR can be found below:

New York State Education Department
Office of College and University Evaluation
Supervisor of Higher Education programs
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234
518-474-1551
IHEAuthorize@nysed.gov

Filing a Disabilities-Related Complaint with New York State

A State complaint is a written, signed statement of an allegation that a local or State educational agency (e.g., school district or other public agency) has violated a requirement of federal or New York State (NYS) law or regulation relating to the education of students with disabilities. If a parent, individual, or organization believes that such a violation has occurred, they may submit a written, signed State complaint to the New York State Education Department (NYSED). Upon receipt of a State complaint, the NYSED must determine if the alleged violation occurred and issue a written decision of its findings.

Please visit the NYSED website for the procedures and requirements for filing a State complaint. A State complaint must be made in writing and must be signed by the complainant (faxed or e-mail signatures will not be accepted). NYSED also publishes FAQ's about State complaints here.

IX. Student Monitoring

A. Conditional Acceptance

A student who is admitted conditionally will need to meet with the Dean of Student Life to assess the progress made in the areas of concern by the end of the student's first trimester. If further monitoring is necessary, the student will be informed at that meeting.

Please note that AJR has a status of “contingent acceptance,” which is different than a “conditional acceptance.” “Contingent acceptance” refers to a candidate who has been admitted into an AJR program but the admissions committee is waiting upon receipt of an official document (such as a transcript) before confirming acceptance.

Under certain extenuating circumstances, prospective students may apply for matriculation into an ordination program at AJR without having earned a Baccalaureate Degree. When such a candidate has met with the Dean of Admissions and/or other members of the Administration, and is considered to be a highly qualified candidate, with an exceptional background, the following process and pathway may take place:

1. Select members of the Administration of AJR, including the Dean of Admissions, will carefully and confidentially assess if a potential candidate is eligible to apply for admission based on their individual personal, professional, and academic experiences. Some factors to be considered may include, but are not limited to, partial college studies (e.g., an Associate’s Degree), military service, communal involvement and leadership, significant volunteer work in Jewish environments, deep Jewish study outside of a formal setting, and relevant work history.
2. The admissions application will include an additional essay, in which the candidate will discuss their work and general involvement in the Jewish community, and any other relevant professional or life experience that supports their path toward becoming clergy.
3. The candidate may apply to their preferred ordination program and, if accepted, will receive a “conditional acceptance.” The student will be required to fulfill additional requirements in order to change their acceptance from “conditional” to a “full acceptance” status, as delineated below.
4. If accepted into the program, the student will observe a conditional period for a structured amount of time during which they take classes and their academic capacity is assessed:
    - -If the student has an Associate’s Degree they must take four AJR courses (2 credits each), and must earn a grade of B or higher in each class before this provisional period is completed.
    - -Students without an Associate’s Degree, who have fewer college credits, must take 6 classes (2 credits each) and must earn a grade of B or higher in each class before the conditional period is completed.
    - -The course instructors will be asked to provide feedback to the Admissions Committee, affirming that the student is capable of academic success in our class setting.
    - -Once these criteria are met, the conditional period shall be considered complete and their status will be changed from conditional to fully matriculated status.
    - -All course credits earned during the conditional period will count normally toward the student’s required academic program.
5. During the provisional period, students are eligible to apply for institutional financial aid.
6. During the provisional period, students may not be eligible for Federal Aid, dependent upon federal guidelines at the time.
7. During the provisional period, students are required to attend the Fall and Spring Gatherings.
8. The matriculated student body at AJR shall comprise no more than 8% of students who fall into the category of not having a Baccalaureate Degree. This is meant to be an exception to our typical norms for admissions criteria.
9. As long as NY State rules allow it, then these students will be permitted to pursue the MA in Jewish Studies at AJR. In any case, students need to do the full 140 (rabbinical or cantorial) or 160 (kol Bo) credit programs.

B. Jewish Status of Life Partner/Spouse of Ordination Students

The Academy for Jewish Religion Entrance Requirements state that "the spouse or life partner of an applicant to a program leading to ordination must also be Jewish. It is the conviction of the Academy that this requirement enables our students and our graduates to serve the widest spectrum of the Jewish community as leaders and as exemplars of Jewish life." The natural implication of that admission policy is that the spouse or life partner of an ordination student at the Academy for Jewish Religion must be Jewish. This policy holds true throughout each ordination student's career at the Academy for Jewish Religion. Spouses/ Life Partners whose biological mother is not Jewish must have converted following the same guidelines required of students through a bona fide *Beit Din* with *tevilah* and *milah* or *hatafat dam brit*, as applicable.

C. Ongoing Assessment of Ordination Students

There will be ongoing assessment of each student's growth. A question may arise as to the potential suitability of an AJR student for ordination at any time during a student's career at the Academy. When this occurs, great efforts will be made to enable the student to grow. This assessment process will begin with the Academic Dean.

1) The Dean will speak with the student or will delegate someone to speak with faculty who know the student and the student's field site supervisors. Those who provided references that assisted students in being admitted to AJR may be contacted to determine the extent of the history of the problem behavior and clarify its importance.
2) A faculty member may offer to spend additional counseling hours with the student.
3) If the student is already in therapy and is amenable, an AJR representative may speak with the student's therapist. Therapy may be recommended or required for continuing attendance at AJR. This counseling would be at the student's expense.
4) Students may be asked to formulate learning contracts delineating the stages and methods of the anticipated learning process.

The AJR administration is currently working on updating this assessment in light of student formation (see the section on formation below). More information will be forthcoming in future months.

D. Suspension or Expulsion

To the greatest extent possible, the Administration and Core Faculty of AJR take responsibility for the spiritual and psychological guidance of each student throughout their career at the Academy.
There may be times when a student requires more guidance or support than the institution is able to give or proves to be unsuited for further training. When this is determined, it is the school's duty to ask the student to leave the program.
Suspension or expulsion may result when a student violates Academy policy in any of five areas:

1) Academic – Any student who receives a grade of C, C-, or F will be placed on academic probation. A student placed on academic probation for two consecutive trimesters will be liable for suspension or expulsion, subject to the review of a meeting of AJR administration. Students must maintain a Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 2.00. If a student's GPA for a given trimester, or their cumulative GPA, drops below a 2.00, then they will be placed on academic probation.
2) Personal suitability – A few representative examples of the wide range of personal issues that could lead the Administration to consider suspension or expulsion of any student are:
    a) Repeated incidents of severe emotional volatility or anger
    b) Boundary problems, for example, inability to share classroom or meeting time maturely, chronic lateness, communication skills problems such as regularly calling faculty or student at inappropriate times

c) Romantic, abusive, or sexual approaches to, or relationships with, staff, congregants, clients, or faculty
d) Inability to understand severely destructive behaviors in one's own personality; inability to establish and carry out a plan to modify such behavior(s) to safe, professional levels
e) Gross inability to tolerate and assimilate constructive feedback
f) Conviction by civil or criminal court for illegal activities

3) Financial standing - Students who are in arrears on their payments to the Academy at the end of a trimester will not be admitted to classes until they are in good financial standing unless they have made arrangements with our financial office. It is imperative that students take responsibility for the financial obligations and speak proactively with the financial office to deal with any potential problems that may arise.
4) Violation of copyright infringement laws, including the unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material, whether through the use of AJR's information technology system or otherwise. If AJR becomes aware of suspected copyright infringement or related activities, the school will attempt to identify the perpetrator and notify them of the violation. The notification for first time offenders will include a five-day grace period during which the perpetrator may remove all digital and hard copies of the material that was illegally downloaded, shared, or otherwise obtained (if the identification of a suspected perpetrator and offense occurs during a Jewish or secular holiday season, the timeline will be adjusted accordingly). If the material is not removed, or if it is a second offense, AJR may suspend or expel the student, or may take other sanctioning actions.
5) Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol and illegal possession or distribution of drugs or alcohol (particularly to minors), or contributing to an unsafe environment within the AJR community, including any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers mental or physical health or involves the forced consumption of liquor or drugs.

Suspension or expulsion will, as a rule, be expressed by refusal to readmit a student at the beginning of the subsequent trimester. Only in the gravest cases may a student be suspended or expelled during the course of a trimester. A letter will be given to a suspended student specifying the conditions to be met in order to lift the suspension. Suspension or expulsion may be imposed by a committee of not less than four, comprising members of the senior administration and of the full time faculty.
Students who wish to appeal the imposition of a suspension or expulsion may follow the course described above in the section "Appeal to the Presidential Council."

X. Registration Requirements

A. How to Register

1. Log into Populi

2. In the upper left corner, click on Home to open the App Nav, and select 'my profile.'

3. Click on the student tab, and then on registration. Note, when registration is open you will see the word 'open'. If you don't see it, and you believe it should still be possible to register, please email Linda Ripps (lripps@ajr.edu).

4.You will see the list of courses for the term. Click on the green plus sign next to the course(s) you want to take, and when the enrollment request window opens, click 'add', Note - if you see a clock face instead of the green plus sign, that means there's a waiting list. You can still add the course. When you do so you will see what number you are on the waiting list. It is always a good idea to put your name on the waiting list - sometimes we raise the limit on the number of students in a class, and other times a

decision is made to open a second section. You are not invoiced for a course until you are moved off the waiting list.

5.When you have added all your courses, remember to click 'save' in the upper right corner.

6. If there is a course on the schedule on AJR's website that you don't see on the list of available courses in Populi, that probably means there are prerequisites which you may have, but which are not reflected on your transcript. You can find the prerequisites for a course listed as part of the course descriptions on AJR's website. If you believe you meet these prerequisites contact Matt Goldstone (mgoldstone@ajr.edu). He will email Linda, and ask her to add your name to the course roster.

More detailed instructions can be found here.

B. General Information

All tuition and fees are paid by ACH bank funds transfer (or by wire transfers for international students). AJR does not accept credit cards or checks for the payment of tuition and fees.
The **ONE** exception is the non-refundable registration fee of $270. This fee is paid as part of filling out the registration form – and is paid by credit card. Students will not be able to register for courses until they have filled out the form and paid this fee.

- Fall trimester registration is due on or before 6:00pm Eastern Time on **Wednesday, July 22, 2026** and must be accompanied by your financial aid application, if applying.
- Spring trimester registration is due on or before 6:00pm Eastern Time on **a date to be determined** and must be accompanied by your financial aid application, if applying.
- Summer trimester registration is due on or before 6:00pm Eastern Time on **a date to be determined** and must be accompanied by your financial aid application, if applying.
- All matriculated students who register after the deadlines listed above will be assessed a **late fee** of $150, plus an additional $5 per day, until they register.

ALL STUDENTS (including those maintaining matriculation) are required to register for each term (fall, spring, and summer).

A schedule of courses and a list of descriptions of courses for a given trimester will be uploaded to the AJR website in advance of registration - https://ajr.edu/current-students/.

In order to properly register for courses, a student must do three things:

1) Complete the Populi form with required information (emailed out during the registration period by AJR's Registrar)
2) Register for desired courses on Populi
3) Chose a payment plan option and pay the registration fee

Please note that a late fee of $150 plus an addition $5 per day will be charged to any matriculated student who has not completed all three registration steps by the registration deadline.

Once a student has completed all three required components of registration they will receive an invoice, which can be found on the Financial tab in Populi.

C. Intersession Registration

AJR holds three intersessions in between trimesters: Spring Intersession (in January), Summer Intersession (in May), and Fall Intersession (in August). Registration for intersession courses takes place concurrently with registration for the associated trimester.

Please note that although there is no late fee charged for missing the intersession registration deadline, if at all possible students should register by these deadlines in order to determine whether there is sufficient enrollment for intersession courses to run. Particularly for the in-person intersession courses, timely registration is crucial to ensure that students are able to book transportation and housing.

D. Fall & Spring Gathering Registration

All matriculated students in one of AJR's ordination programs must register for and attend both the Fall and Spring Gatherings, which, typically take place in-person without a Zoom option. Registration for Fall Gathering occurs at the same time as registration for Fall courses and registration for Spring Gathering occurs at the same time as registration for Spring courses. Participation in AJR's Gatherings is an essential component of AJR's ordination programs and waivers for attendance will only be granted in extremely dire circumstances (particularly in the case of health concerns). Note that a full-time job does not count as a dire circumstance, students are expected to arrange their schedules so as to be able to attend these two in-person essential programs. For those students granted a waiver for extenuating situations please note that there will be a required online make-up program, which requires a programming fee (see the Alternate Gathering fee in the list of fees).

E. Maintain Matriculation

Students who are not planning on taking classes during any term, including fall, spring and summer (but are not taking an approved Leave of Absence), must register on Populi for ELE999 – Maintain Matriculation (see Section IV:P above). There is a $270 fee associated with Maintain Matriculation status. Please note that if a student is not taking classes and does not register for Maintain Matriculation (or receive an approved Leave of Absence), they will be considered withdrawn from AJR as of the first day of the term – see section IV:Q above for details.

F. Payment and Deferred Payment Plans

Full payment, or your first installment plan payment must be received by the dates listed below. Should payment not be received by the dates listed below, students will automatically be put on a 3-month payment plan & will incur a $175 late payment fee.

Matriculated students have 3 options for payment: payment in full, 3 installments payment plan, 4 installments payment plan

Gesher students (non-matriculated) have 2 options for payment: payment in full or 3 installments payment plan

If full payment poses a hardship, tuition may be paid in monthly installments. The bursar will set up a payment plan on the student's Populi financial tab, and students will be sent instructions on how to activate it. AJR installment plans must be set up as automatic payments in Populi using an ACH funds transfer. International students only must set up wire transfers.

Below are the payment due dates for each installment plan.

Fall Trimester
Payment in full for students taking the Intersession course is due August 6, 2026.
Payment in full for students not taking the Intersession course is due October 1, 2026.
Three-month payment plans are due August 6, October 6, November 6, 2026.
Four-month payment plans are due August 6, September 8, October 6, November 6, 2026.

Spring Trimester
Payment in full is due by Jan 4, 2027.

Three-month payment plans are due January 4, February 4, March 4, 2027.
Four-month payment plans are due January 4, February 4, March 4, April 5, 2027.

Summer Trimester
Payment in full is due by May 3, 2027.
Three-month payment plans are due May 3, June 3, July 6, 2027.
Four-month payment plans are due May 3, June 3, July 6, July 26, 2027.

A late payment fee of $175 will be assessed if payment is not received by the due date. This fee will be automatically assessed the day after a payment is missed.

Please Note:
Students will not be able to re-register or be ordained (unless an arrangement to complete payment is reached) until full payment is received. The penalty for failure to pay in full by the end of the trimester is based on the amount of the unpaid balance. The penalty will be assessed monthly until the balance is paid.

If the Balance is:	The Penalty is:
Less than $100	$ 50
$100 to $500	$100
$501 and up	$150

G. Add/Drop Period

The standard Add/Drop Period for courses that run for the full 11 sessions in one term is during the first two weeks of courses and concludes at the end of the second week of courses (for related refund policies, see the next section). The Add/Drop Period for one credit classes that only run for half of the term is the first week of that course, concluding with the end of the first week in which that course runs. For example, if a one credit class runs for the second half of the Fall trimester, then the Add/Drop Period for this course is the first week in which this course runs, although it is in the middle of the standard trimester. Note that there is no Add/Drop Period for intersession courses.

Please note that dropping courses (or withdrawing from courses after the add/drop period) can directly impact Federal Student Aid, including aid that has already been received and which might need to be returned. Dropping courses, or withdrawing from courses after the add/drop period, can also impact the need to repay prior loans that were being deferred. For details, please consult Rabbi David Cavill, Director of Financial Aid and Operations (dcavill@ajr.edu).

H. Refunds

Refunds (Complete Withdrawal from Term) – Students who cancel their entire registration prior to the first day of classes are entitled to a refund of 95% of that trimester's tuition; students who withdraw after the first day of classes during the first two weeks of the term are entitled to a refund of 80% of that trimester's tuition; students who withdraw during the third week of classes are entitled to a refund of 60% of that trimester's tuition. No refunds will be made after the start of the fourth week of the term.

Refunds (One or More Courses – but not all courses) – Students who drop a course within the add/drop period will do so without penalty. Students who withdraw from a course after the add/drop period ends, but within the first month of a trimester (for a course that runs the entire term), or within the first two weeks of the course for a course that runs half the term, are entitled to a refund of 60% of the tuition for that course. No refunds will be made after the first four weeks of classes for a course that runs the entire term or after the first two weeks of a course that runs half the term.

Intersession Refunds – Students who cancel registration of an intersession course prior to the start of the first day of the course are entitled to a refund of 95% of the course. Given the condensed nature of intersession courses, students who withdraw from an intersession course by 11:59 am on the first day, are entitled to a 50% refund for a two-day intersession course, and a 75% refund for a four-day course. If a student withdraws from an intersession course after 11:59 am on the first day of the course, no refund will be given.

Registration fees, in all cases, are nonrefundable.

All refunds are made by ACH bank funds transfer. Refunds for international students are made by check.

Fall and Spring Gatherings Refund Policy for Matriculated Students

11 days in advance & earlier (up to the Tuesday 11 days prior to the Gathering), with approved waiver:

– Full credit to account plus a $350 charge for the Alternative Gathering

10 days in advance & later (starting Wednesday of the week prior to the week of the Gathering):

– No refund. $350 of fees already paid will be applied to the Alternative Gathering fee.

Exceptions to the no refund policy may be made in the case of a death in the family or other serious emergency. A refund in the case of a qualifying emergency must be approved by the Academic Dean.

XI. Tuition and Fees

A. Tuition by Number of Credits

Credits	Tuition	Credits	Tuition
1	$1,568	8	$11,167
2	$3,136	9	$11,167
3	$4,704	10	$11,167
4	$6,272	11	$11,526
5	$7,840	12	$11, 526
6	$9,408	13	$11, 526
7	$10,680	14	$11, 526

Per additional credit over 14 credits – $1,394

B. Other Costs of Attendance

It is estimated that books and supplies will cost approximately $450 per year. Because AJR conducts almost all classes online AJR does not operate any housing or food services. The AJR student community tends to be varied in terms of where students live and therefore costs vary considerably for attending the Gatherings.

Optional Student Association dues of $36 are collected in the fall and spring trimester with registration.

C. Mechina Hebrew

The AJR Mechina Hebrew Program is a three trimester progression which prepares students to take Hebrew 250 (1A). Classes meet two days a week. The special tuition rate for Mechina Hebrew (or Mechina Jewish Studies) is the equivalent of three (3) credits per trimester ($4,704). Each student will take a Hebrew placement test to confirm where in the Mechina program they belong. See Section XVII below for more information.

D. Fieldwork Support Seminar

Students taking FWSS are required to submit a form for approval in advance of registering for this course. The form can be downloaded here.

E. Alphabetical List of Fees

Accelerated Program Fee – $850

Alternate Fall Gathering & Spring Gathering Fees - $350

Application Fee – $375 (Ordination Program); $50 (M.A. Program)

Audit (Alumni) - $775 for non-ARC Members; $500 for ARC Members [fees are halved for a one credit course]

Audit (Current Student) – Audit rate is one-half the applicable rate per each audited course

Bulk Transfer Credit and Advanced Standing Fee – $750

Coaching with AJR *Nusah* Instructors – $900

Coaching with Outside Instructors - $200

Fall Gathering – $895 | Single Room Supplement + $195

Gabbai – $1568 – counts toward the total tuition package

Incomplete Extension Fee – $ 75

Independent Study Fee – 1 Credit = $1200; 2 Credits = $2100; 4 Credits = $3900

Late Registration Fee – $150 the day after registration ends & increases by $5 per day until registration is completed

Late Payment fee – $175 automatically assessed the day after a missed payment was due

Master's Project Fee $500

Payment Processing Error Fee - $5

Registration Fee – $270

Ritual Skills Workshop – $850

Senior Ordination Fee – $1200

Spring Gathering – $895 | Single Room Supplement + $195

Transcript Fee - $5 per transcript

Transfer Credit and Advanced Standing Fee – $200 per 2 credits

Optional Student Association dues of $36 are collected in the fall and spring trimester with registration.

F. Descriptions of Fees

ACCELERATED PROGRAM FEE – Covers meeting with the Dean and selected faculty members to outline the requirements for the individual student's accelerated program.

ALTERNATE GATHERING FEE – With an approved waiver, you will be registered for the Alternative Gathering and the fee will be adjusted.

APPLICATION FEE – Non-refundable fee for applying to one of AJR's programs. Ordination application fee includes fee for psychosocial evaluation.

AUDIT (ALUMNI) – Tuition for an AJR alum to audit a 2 credit class.

AUDIT (CURRENT STUDENT) – Tuition for a current or non-matriculated AJR student to audit a course

BULK TRANSFER CREDIT AND ADVANCED STANDING FEE – Covers the transfer of 8 or more credits of Transfer Credits and/or Advanced Standing at one time from a single institution.

COACHING WITH AJR *NUSAH* INSTRUCTORS – Fee is for matriculated cantorial students to coach with an AJR *Nusah* instructor (fee per trimester).

COACHING WITH OUTSIDE INSTRUCTORS – Administrative fee in addition to any financial arrangement between the student and private coach (fee per trimester)

FALL GATHERING – Attendance at the Fall Gathering is mandatory for all matriculated ordination students, including those solely registered for Maintain Matriculation. Gesher and M.A. students are encouraged to attend and will be billed accordingly.

GABBAI – To earn 1 credit for coordinating 2-3 afternoon services per week, plus 1-2 morning services per trimester, and directed study with the Rabbi-in-Residence.

INCOMPLETE EXTENSION FEE – For students granted a lengthy extension on an incomplete, this fee is for having the work graded.

INDEPENDENT STUDY FEE – Depends on the number of credits.

LATE REGISTRATION FEE – A fee for matriculated students who complete the registration process after the registration deadline.

LATE PAYMENT FEE – All late payment penalties will be automatically added to a student's Populi account balance. Late payment fees will be fully enforced.

MASTER'S PROJECT FEE – To compensate advisors for working with students on Master's Projects (some students engage in external arrangements with advisors to compensate them further).

PAYMENT PROCESSING ERROR FEE – For problems incurred in paying by ACH or credit card.

REGISTRATION FEE – Non-refundable trimester fee for all students taking courses or to maintain matriculation.

RITUAL SKILLS WORKSHOP – An optional workshop for ordination students to improve their facility with key ritual skills.

SENIOR ORDINATION FEE – Billed at beginning of Spring trimester for seniors being ordained, covers ordination, reception and ordination administrative expenses.

SPRING GATHERING – Attendance at the Spring Gathering is mandatory for all matriculated ordination students, including those solely registered for Maintain Matriculation. Gesher and M.A. students are encouraged to attend and will be billed accordingly.

TRANSCRIPT FEE – To order an official transcript.

TRANSFER CREDITS AND ADVANCED STANDING FEE – For transfer credits and/or Advanced Standing up to 7 credits (for 8 credits or more, see the Bulk Transfer Credit and Advanced Standing Fee).

CORE CONCEPTS SEMINAR – Ordination students are required to take four of the six trimesters of Core Concepts Seminar. Rabbinical and cantorial students are not charged for these four seminars and receive no credit.

XII. Financial Aid

Matriculated students taking a minimum of 4 credits per trimester may apply for AJR Financial Aid. Aid awards have typically been up to 15% of a student's tuition but, depending on a student's need and at the discretion of the Financial Aid Committee, may be higher up to a maximum of 25% of tuition, rounded to the nearest $5. This formula is based upon need—as determined by the student and confirmed with the Financial Aid Committee. AJR Financial aid is not available for fees, cantorial coaching, or tuition for Independent Study courses. The Financial Aid committee will consider awarding aid to a student enrolled for fewer than 4 credits under exigent circumstances if there are sufficient funds available.

To apply for AJR Financial Aid, all applicants will be required to provide the following financial information (which is only reviewed by the AJR financial aid staff and the Financial Aid Committee): Current bank balance(s), market value of securities, available trusts, monthly household income, monthly expenses, total monthly expenses, aid from other sources, other anticipated expenses, and a tax return.

Matriculated AJR students are able to apply for Federal Student Aid in the form of Direct Unsubsidized Loans. AJR's Director of Financial Aid and Operations, Rabbi David Cavill, can provide all matriculated AJR students with information on how to apply for these loans. Students interested in applying for Federal Student Aid should first apply for AJR Financial Aid.

More information about Federal Student Aid can be found here.

The Academy for Jewish Religion's programs are registered with New York State and the relevant HEGIS Code (Higher Education General Information Survey) is 2299.00. Enrollment in other than registered or otherwise approved programs may jeopardize a student's eligibility for certain student aid awards.

To apply, click here for the AJR Financial Aid application. You will be directed to Populi login to access the financial aid application.

AJR periodically sends out information to students about private scholarships and fellowship for which students can apply.

For questions regarding AJR Financial Aid, please contact Linda Ripps (lripps@ajr.edu).

For questions regarding AJR's administration of Federal Student Aid, please contact Rabbi David Cavill (dcavill@ajr.edu).

AJR no longer offers interest-free loans.

Canadian Aid

All matriculated students who are residents of Canada, regardless of citizenship, will be offered AJR institutional financial aid worth 25% of their trimester bill for tuition (not including fees or independent studies). This financial aid will be in addition to any need-based financial aid a student may receive. Non-matriculated (Gesher) students residing in Canada, regardless of citizenship, are also eligible for this form of financial aid but only for a maximum of three terms (trimesters). This Board of Trustees reviews this form of aid annually when it reviews and sets all tuition charges and other fees.

XIII. Student Association

The AJR Student Association is a student-run organization dedicated to supporting the spiritual, emotional, educational, professional, and physical needs of AJR students. An integral part of AJR, the Student Association (SA) is comprised of matriculated rabbinical, cantorial, and graduate students. Representatives from the Student Association liaise with the school administration and the Board of Trustees to ensure that student voices are well-represented at AJR.

The SA meets monthly during lunch time on rotating days of the week and is governed by an elected slate of officers drawn from the cantorial, rabbinical, and graduate programs. Each student is asked to pay annual dues, which provide funds for the SA to sponsor community-building events throughout the year. Please be in touch with the student association if you have ideas about how to support student needs at AJR. Our SA officers are here to help! Below, please find a contact list of this year's SA officers:

President: Andrea Shupack

Vice President: Jon Mitzmacher

Secretary: Sue Potechin

Treasurer: Leo Linder

Rabbinic Program Liaison: Alice Yasuna

Cantorial Program Liaison: Ben Romano

Student Representative to the Board: Naomi Wittlin

Student Representative to ARC: Debra Fricano

Digital Learning and Programming Representative: TBD

Gemilut Hasadim Coordinator: Sheryl Gordon

The AJR Student Association can help guide you to resources that can help you in your journey at AJR. Please contact the President (andreashupack@gmail.com) to be in touch with any of the Student Association Officers.

XIV. Library

AJR subscribes to the Digital Theological Library (DTL), which includes over 1,500,000 e-books, over 150 databases, over 22,000 journals, and over 100,000 musical scores. This amazing collection supports high-level graduate research for AJR's students across the US and around the world. For login information, please contact the librarian at librarian@ajr.edu.

The AJR physical Library collection consists of approximately 10,000 catalogued titles. The library catalogue can be accessed on the school's website. (enter "AJR Library" as the Library name, there is no password). Students borrowing items from AJR's physical collection must sign out each book with the AJR Office or Librarian. Non-reserve books may be signed out for a period of thirty days.

Books not found in the library's collection can be obtained through Inter-library loan. Contact the AJR librarian for more information.

The Library website also maintains a list of valuable online resources for conducting research.

XV. Overview of Ordination Programs

AJR offers two different ordination programs: The Rabbinical Program and the Cantorial Program. Students also have the option of pursuing a dual ordination in both Rabbinical and Cantorial Programs simultaneously in the *Kol-Bo* Program. Within the Rabbinical Program there is a special track for invested or ordained cantors to pursue rabbinical ordination at an accelerated pace: The Cantors to Rabbis Track. Within the Cantorial Program there is a special track for ordained rabbis to pursue cantorial ordination at an accelerated pace: The Rabbis to Cantors Track Details about each of these programs can be found in this Catalog as well as on AJR's website.

XVI. The *Gesher* Program

Gesher is the Hebrew word for bridge. The *Gesher* program is a bridge into the Academy's ordination programs. Individuals who are not sure that they want to pursue a course of study leading to ordination may enroll in regular AJR courses as non-matriculating students. This experience allows inquiring students to clarify their goals in order to determine whether the Academy is the right learning environment for them.

AJR typically limits the number of credits that a student may take prior to matriculation that can be used to fulfill requirements for one of AJR's programs upon matriculation. For those in a regular ordination program, a maximum of 20 credits (typically 10 two credit classes) taken prior to matriculation may be used to fulfill AJR program requirements. For those in the MA Program (alone), a maximum of 6 credits (typically 3 two credit classes) taken prior to matriculation may be used to fulfill AJR program requirements. For those in the Cantors to Rabbis track, a maximum of 10 credits (typically 5 two credit classes) taken prior to matriculation may be used to

fulfill AJR program requirements. In exceptional circumstances, these allowances may be adjusted in conversation with the Academic Dean.

If non-matriculated students take (and successfully pass) additional required classes, they do not need to retake these courses, but they are responsible for taking other (non-required, elective) classes to fulfill the required number of credits for their program.

Non-matriculated students may participate no more than twice in AJR Open House events.

Admission to the *Gesher* program is based upon an interview with the Dean of Admissions.

Participation in the *Gesher* program does not represent admission to, or preference in admission to, the ordination or graduate programs. Those registering for classes understand and agree that AJR reserves and retains the right to refuse admission to our degree and ordination programs, regardless of the number of courses that a person has taken prior to matriculation. The Academy also reserves and retains the right to refuse to allow any person to register for any course and to refuse to allow any person to join any AJR event.

Gesher students are strongly urged to participate in AJR community activities including the Gatherings. Transfer credit and advanced standing are evaluated upon admission into one of the ordination programs. The special Cantors to Rabbis and Rabbis to Cantors track rate is only available to ordained/invested cantors and rabbis for two trimesters prior to matriculation (see XVIII:F:iii and XIX:J:iii below).

XVII. Mechina Hebrew

The AJR Mechina (preparatory) Hebrew curriculum typically involves a three trimester progression (Mechina 1, Mechina 2, and Mechina 3), which prepares students to take Hebrew 250 (1A). Each Mechina class meets twice a week for eleven weeks. The Mechina Hebrew curriculum was created to meet the needs of students with limited grounding in Hebrew language – some students may only need one or two trimesters while those coming to AJR with very limited Hebrew knowledge can benefit from the full three-trimester progression (in some cases the Mechina course progression may involve more than 3 trimesters depending on the pace of the cohort). Students may apply for, and be admitted to, any of AJR's programs prior to taking Mechina Hebrew. Mechina students who are matriculated in an ordination program are part of the Academy community and are expected to participate in the Gatherings.

Participation in Mechina Hebrew does not represent admission to or preference for admission to one of the ordination programs.

XVIII. The Rabbinical Program

A. Program Overview

The Rabbinical Program leads to ordination as *Rav U-moreh/morah B'Yisrael*, Rabbi and Teacher in Israel. The program is designed to train students to serve the evolving Jewish community through preparation in academic scholarship, traditional Jewish study, ethics, professional skills and spiritual grounding. The Rabbinical Program revolves around five core goals:

1. Students will demonstrate recognition of the legitimacy of multiple points of view and approaches, both historically in the Jewish tradition and in the interplay of contemporary Jewish movements and schools of thought.

2. Students will demonstrate competence in Jewish texts, history, and culture. This encompasses competence in traditional and academic approaches to reading and interpreting biblical, rabbinic, liturgical, and philosophical texts. Students will demonstrate competence in reading and comprehending ancient, medieval, and modern texts in their original languages of Hebrew and Aramaic.

3. Students will demonstrate competence in the professional and pastoral aspects of their clerical roles. This encompasses core knowledge of counseling, education, the role of music in Jewish liturgical chanting (nusah and trope), and the skills to officiate at worship services and life-cycle events.

4. Students will demonstrate knowledge of contemporary American, Israeli and world-wide Jewish communities – including the roles of the rabbi and the cantor –and a range of skills to creatively address long-standing issues as well as the most recent developments.

5. Students will demonstrate engagement in the development of their identity as spiritual leaders and spiritual seekers in the Jewish community.

This section of the Catalog includes a list of requirements for rabbinical ordination. In conjunction with your advisor, you will keep track of these requirements through Degree Audit on Populi.

The Rabbinical Program includes a number of requirements including 104 credits plus a 36 credit Master's Degree, 1 unit of CPE, four trimesters of Core Concepts Seminar and two half-terms of Clergy Formation Seminar (no credit), successful completion of four comprehensive exams, and successful completion of a number of Ritual Skills (see the Ritual Skills section in this Catalog).

iv. M.A. Requirement

All students in AJR's regular Rabbinic ordination track (i.e., not Cantors to Rabbis) who have not already earned a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies (or a related field) for which they wrote a thesis or completed a Master's Project are required to complete AJR's Master's Degree in Jewish Studies. *The required credits for AJR's Master's Degree are built into the curriculum of the regular Rabbinic ordination track and AJR will continue to transfer credits from all prior graduate level work to fulfill AJR course requirements as applicable* (see Sections IV:G and IV:I for details about transfer credits). Thus, the Master's Project is the only additional element required to earn AJR's Master's Degree beyond the 140 credits that are part of the regular Rabbinic Program + MA curriculum. See Section XXI:D for details about the Master's Project.

B. Program Requirements

There are currently 140 academic credits (104 credits for the rabbinical ordination and 36 credits for the Master's Degree), 4 trimesters of Core Concepts Seminar, two half terms of Clergy Formation Seminar, and 1 unit of CPE required for ordination. If a student chooses not to complete a unit of CPE, they must complete an addition two terms of Fieldwork with FWSS (for no credit) - see Section XXIII below. Each trimester you will meet with the Academic Dean or the Assistant Academic Dean to discuss the courses that you will take that trimester. There are certain courses that need to be taken in order and one should strive to take the entry-level courses as soon as possible. An example of this is the Talmud curriculum where the following courses must be taken in order: Introduction to Mishnah, two trimesters of Introduction to Talmud, two trimesters of Intermediate Talmud and one trimester of Advanced Talmud. Now that AJR is running on a trimester system, students who want to study full time all year round can finish the program in four years as long as they are ready to enter Hebrew IIA in beginning their studies at AJR. Others will choose to study at a more measured pace, finishing the program in five years, or longer when competed through part time study.

C. Rabbinic Course Requirements

The following reflects the combined rabbinical ordination and M.A. Degree course requirements as of Fall 5785 (2025). Students with over fifty credits prior to Fall 5785 (2025) fall under the previous Rabbinic Course curriculum.

Please note: Courses are 2 credits each unless otherwise indicated.

BIBLE (12 credits)
Introduction to Bible
Introduction to Parshanut
Leadership in the Bible/ Nevi'im Rishonim
Electives (6 credits)

HEBREW (25 credits)
Hebrew I (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Hebrew II (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Hebrew IIIA (4 credits)
Hebrew IIIB (2 credits)
Liturgical Hebrew (1 credit)
Biblical Hebrew

HISTORY (10 credits)
Great Ideas and Debates of Jewish History I
Great Ideas and Debates of Jewish History II
American Jewish History, Society, and Culture*
History of Zionism and Israel
Israel Today

LITURGY (10 credits)
Introduction to Liturgy
Shabbat Liturgy
Festival Liturgy
Yamim Noraim Liturgy
Tefillah and Seminar

PHILOSOPHY (13 credits)
Medieval Philosophy
Modern Philosophy
Personal Theology
Mysticism Elective
Pluralism
Bio-Ethics (1 credit)
Comparative Religion

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS (30 credits)
Pastoral Counseling I
Pastoral Counseling II
Homiletics (3 credit)
Education (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Life Cycle I
Life Cycle II
Life Cycle III
Conversion (1 credit)
Fieldwork Support Seminar (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)***
Core Concepts Seminar (4 trimesters, 0 credits, no tuition)
Clergy Formation Seminar (two half-trimesters, 0 credits, no tuition)
Entrepreneurship and Community Planting
Science and Judaism (2 credits)**
Difficult Conversations (1 credit)
Responding to Antisemitism (1 credit)
Peace Studies

RABBINICS/HALAKHAH (24 credits)
Introduction to Mishna
Introduction to Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Intermediate Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Advanced Talmud
Midrash I
Midrash II
Introduction to Codes
Intermediate Codes
Advanced Codes
Introduction to Responsa

SPIRITUALITY (6 credits)
Architecture of Ritual
Sacred Arts
Spirituality Elective

ELECTIVES (10 credits)****

* Note that students living outside of the United States may take a comparable course in the Jewish History and Culture of their country instead of American Jewish History, Society, and Culture.

** Note that students who had 50 credits prior to Fall 2021 may take 6 credits of Entrepreneurship instead of 4 credits of Entrepreneurship and 2 credits of Judaism and Science.

***Students who opt not to complete 1 unit of CPE will also need to take an additional 2 trimesters of FWSS (no credit, but tuition paid).

**** Note that Hebrew courses cannot count as Electives

Previous Rabbinic Course Curriculum

The following reflects the combined rabbinical ordination and M.A. Degree course requirements for students with over fifty credits prior to Fall 5785 (2025).

Please note: Courses are 2 credits each unless otherwise indicated.

BIBLE (14 credits)
Introduction to Bible
Introduction to Parshanut
Parashat Hashavua
Leadership in the Bible/ Nevi'im Rishonim
Electives (6 credits)

HEBREW (27 credits)
Hebrew I (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Hebrew II (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Hebrew III (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Biblical Hebrew
Hebrew Phonetics and Morphology (1 credit)

HISTORY (8 credits)
Great Ideas and Debates of Jewish History I
Great Ideas and Debates of Jewish History II
American Jewish History, Society, and Culture*
Israeli History, Society and Culture

LITURGY (11 credits)
Introduction to Liturgy
Shabbat Liturgy
Festival Liturgy
Yamim Noraim Liturgy
Tefillah and Seminar (with multiple courses totaling 3 credits)

PHILOSOPHY (11 credits)
Medieval Philosophy
Modern Philosophy
Personal Theology
Mysticism Elective
Pluralism
Bio-Ethics (1 credit)

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS (22 credits)
Pastoral Counseling I
Pastoral Counseling II
Homiletics (1 credit)
Education (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Life Cycle I
Life Cycle II
Conversion (1 credit)
Chaplaincy (1 credit)
Fieldwork Support Seminar (4 trimesters, 0 credits)
Core Concepts Seminar (4 trimesters, 0 credits)
Entrepreneurship and Community Planting (with multiple courses totally 4 credits)
Science and Judaism (2 credits)**
Difficult Conversations (1 credit)

RABBINICS/HALAKHAH (30 credits)
Introduction to Mishna
Introduction to Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Intermediate Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Advanced Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Midrash I
Midrash II
Introduction to Codes (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Intermediate Codes
Advanced Codes
Introduction to Responsa
Critical Issues (Halakhah)

SPIRITUALITY (6 credits)
Architecture of Ritual
Sacred Arts
Spirituality Elective

ELECTIVES (11 credits)

* Note that students living outside of the United States may take a comparable course in the Jewish History and Culture of their country instead of American Jewish History, Society, and Culture.

** Note that students who had 50 credits prior to Fall 2021 may take 6 credits of Entrepreneurship instead of 4 credits of Entrepreneurship and 2 credits of Judaism and Science.

D. Comprehensive Exams

Only matriculated students are eligible to take comprehensive exams.

Students have access to the Comprehensive Exam Preparation group on Populi, which includes a number of resources for preparing for exams (if you are a matriculated student and do not currently have access to this Populi group, please email Linda Ripps [lripps@ajr.edu]).

For each of the written exams four hours will be allowed. Some students find they need all that time and others find they need much less time. For each of the oral exams, the initial testing time will be approximately 30 minutes for the Codes exam and 45 minutes for the Talmud exam, both in the presence of two testers. After a student has completed the elements of the oral test, the two testers will privately discuss the results and the student will then either be told that they have passed, that they need to retake the exam, or that another 10 minutes of testing will be required – followed by another brief conference by the testers and a final determination.

In order for students to be ordained they must take the following exams (see materials in the Comprehensive Exam Preparation group for more details):

Liturgical Hebrew

A translation of liturgical texts. Hard copy dictionaries and the following digital dictionaries are allowed: Modern Hebrew; BDB; Jastrow.

Bible and *Parshanut*

This exam involves translating comments of various *meforshim* (commentators) that students prepare in advance and translating unseen passages from the Hebrew Bible. Students will receive preparatory material for the *parshanut* portion of this exam 72 hours before they take the exam. For the unseen Hebrew Bible texts students may use a Hebrew only *Tanakh* as well as hard copy dictionaries and the following digital dictionaries: Modern Hebrew; BDB; Jastrow.

Talmud

This Oral examination will involve three components: 1) Identifying Mishnaic tractates by their respective Order (*Seder*) and briefly describing the contents of the tractate; 2) Translating and explaining Talmudic and midrashic technical terms; 3) Reading, translating, and explaining a selected Talmudic passage (or two). For more details, see the Talmud Comprehensive Exam Overview available in the Populi Comprehensive Exam Preparation group, which includes a list of the tractates, technical terms, and *sugyot* option.

Codes

This Oral examination will involve two components: 1) Identifying and explaining several key halakhic terms; 2) Translating and explaining selections from the *Mishneh Torah*. For more details, see the Codes exam section of the Populi Comprehensive Exam Preparation group, which includes a list of halakhic terms and the *Mishneh Torah* passages.

Written examinations are conducted on Zoom and proctored an AJR staff member. If you are interested in taking a comprehensive exam, please contact Rabbi Matthew Goldstone (mgoldstone@ajr.edu).

Beginning in Fall 2025, AJR piloted an alternative comprehensive exam option. For students who prefer not to take the regular Bible, Codes, and/or Talmud exam, they may study the material with an approved tutor as an "Alternative Comprehensive Exam." The alternative option is not available for the Liturgical Hebrew exam. Utilizing the alternative option is contingent upon the availability of approved tutors. The Alternative Comprehensive Exam option will typically take place over a series of 10 sessions during a regular AJR trimester and the fee for students is $1150 per exam. In accordance with AJR policies, comprehensive exams, or the Alternative Comprehensive Exam option, should be completed *prior* to the fall of a student's senior year. However, for the 2025-2026 academic year, and in certain exceptional cases, students may take certain comprehensive exams and utilize the alternative option during the fall of their senior year. However, in order to be ordained in the Spring, all exams or alternatives must be completed by the end of the prior December.

Any fees associated with the Alternative Comprehensive Exam option are not part of the consideration for financial aid.

Students may also opt to take part of a comprehensive exam and complete the remaining portion through the alternative option. In this case, the number of sessions and rates are as follows:

- Bible
    - Tanakh Translation Portion – 5 sessions ($650)
    - Parshanut Portion – 5 sessions ($650)
- Talmud
    - Tractates and Terminology Portion - 5 sessions ($650)
    - Sugya/Sugyot Portion - 5 sessions ($650)

Students opting for the Alternative Comprehensive Exam option will need to be enrolled in this option by the Registrar in Populi.

Material to be covered for the Codes and Talmud exams are readily available in the Populi Comprehensive Exams Preparation group. Material to cover for the Alternative Comprehensive Exam option for the Bible exam will be provided to students and tutors who opt for this option.

For students completing an entire exam through the alternative option, the tutor with whom they are working will need to submit two written reports to the AJR office following AJR guidelines. The first report should be submitted after 4 sessions confirming that adequate progress is being made. The second written report will be submitted after all 10 sessions are completed. For students opting for only a portion of either the Talmud or Bible exam, tutors submit a single report at the conclusions of the 5 sessions.

Ideally students will cover all of the relevant comprehensive exam material during the course of their sessions. Even if students do not cover all of the material, as long as they have made satisfactory progress, upon receipt of the tutor's final report, their comprehensive exam requirement for the relevant area will be considered complete. However, if a student does not make satisfactory progress in the material, as determined by the AJR administration, AJR reserves the right to require the student to do additional work towards completing this requirement. By opting for the Alternative Comprehensive Exam option, students are accepting this possibility, which the AJR administration hopes will only be applicable in a small minority of cases if at all.

E. Ritual Skills

Students are required to demonstrate their competence in Ritual Skills by oral examination. AJR regularly offers Ritual Skills workshops during lunchtime programming as well as a Ritual Skills workshop course (no credit) in

order to help students develop these skills. Testing for Ritual Skills takes place throughout the academic year. Student should contact the Ritual Skills Coordinator in order to facilitate scheduling a testing appointment.

Current students have access to a group on Populi called "Ritual Skills," which contains valuable resources and recordings from previous lunchtime Ritual Skills programming that are of help for preparing to fulfill Ritual Skills requirements.

Only matriculated students are permitted to test on Ritual Skills.

Ritual Skills Timeline

The Ritual Skills program is divided into five units. All skills will be tested; there will not be multiple choice type questions. Students are encouraged to complete the units as follows:

Unit *Alef* should be completed by the end of 14 credits.

Unit *Bet* should be completed by the end of 28 credits.

Unit *Gimmel* should be completed by the end of 42 credits.

Unit *Dalet* should be completed by the end of 56 credits

Unit *Heh* should be completed by the end of the fall trimester of the senior year.

Detailed information about Ritual Skills requirements can be found in the Ritual Skills Handbook.

F. The Cantors to Rabbis Track

As the Jewish world changes and our clergy roles contract, expand, and evolve, cantors often find themselves wishing they had the tools to fulfill all that is being asked of them as spiritual leaders. Some feel the desire to learn more – add text study, Talmud, history, and homiletics. The reasons can be complex, the outcomes wide-ranging, but the one unifying feeling is the sense of wanting to serve in a fulfilling and productive way.

The Academy for Jewish Religion is proud to offer ordained and invested cantors the opportunity to add rabbinic ordination to their already impressive mastery of *nusah*, *tefillah*, and all that goes with cantorial ordination or investiture.

i. Track Requirements

The requirements for the Cantors to Rabbis Track depend upon whether the student earned their cantorial ordination at AJR or elsewhere and whether they already hold a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies (or a related field) or not. Students may be able to pass out of specific requirements based upon prior study, however, this will not reduce the basic minimum number of credits that they must complete at AJR in order to earn their degree (including the MA Degree for those simultaneously earning the MA with their ordination). In this context, "basic minimum" refers to the absolute minimum number of credits that a student must earn at AJR, while "minimum" refers to the regular minimum for the track, which can be reduced through demonstrating Hebrew proficiency. Some students may be required to take more than the minimum number of credits if the AJR administration determines that there are relevant gaps in their previous education.

Students matriculating into the Cantors to Rabbis Track who did *not* earn their cantorial ordination at AJR but who already hold a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies (or a related field) are required to complete a minimum of 60 credits (including 6 credits of Modern Hebrew that one may pass out of by demonstrating significant mastery, leaving a basic minimum of 54 credits). However, if the AJR administration determines that there are gaps in the student's knowledge they may be required to complete additional courses beyond the 60 credits. If the student did not write a thesis or capstone project for their prior Master's Degree in Jewish Studies (or a related field),

then they are required to complete a Master's Project at AJR and, if they choose to take an additional 20 credits, they will also receive a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies from AJR (if they do not complete the additional 20 credits, they must still complete a Master's Project at AJR but they will not receive a Master's Degree).

Students matriculating into the Cantors to Rabbis Track who did *not* earn their cantorial ordination at AJR and who do *not* already hold a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies (or a related field) are required to complete a minimum of 80 credits (including 6 credits of Modern Hebrew that one may pass out of by demonstrating significant mastery, leaving a basic minimum of 74 credits) and a Master's Project at AJR and, upon completion, will receive both ordination and a Master's in Jewish Studies from AJR. However, if the AJR administration determines that there are gaps in the student's knowledge they may be required to complete additional courses beyond the 80 credits.

Students matriculating into the Cantors to Rabbis Track who earned their cantorial ordination and MA Degree at AJR are required to complete a basic minimum of 45 credits, which cannot be reduced.

Course requirements for the Cantors to Rabbis Track assume significant competency in areas such as Hebrew, Liturgy, and professional skills. Proficiency will be evaluated on an individual basis. As noted, **students may be required to take additional courses**. In addition, students are responsible for taking four comprehensive exams and for fulfilling a number of Ritual Skills – as well as the Master's Project where applicable.

Please note that students who are only required to take the basic minimum number of credits to complete the Cantors to Rabbis Track (whether 45, 54, or 74) are not eligible to fulfill AJR course credit through transfer credits, independent study, or exemption examination (students may be exempt from specific courses through theses means, this will not reduce the total number of credits that they must complete at AJR). Likewise, students in the Cantors to Rabbis Track who are also required to complete the AJR M.A. in Jewish Studies are not eligible to fulfill credits towards this degree through transfer credits, independent study, or exemption examination.

ii. Course Requirements

As noted above, course requirements assume significant competency in areas such as Hebrew, Liturgy, and professional skills. Proficiency will be evaluated on an individual basis.

The following reflects the Cantors to Rabbis Track course requirements as of Fall 5785 (2025). Students who had already earned 16 credits towards this Track at AJR prior to Fall 5785 (2025) and who are not earning an MA at AJR fall under the old Cantors to Rabbis curriculum (see the "Previous Cantors to Rabbis Course Requirements" section below).

Courses are 2 credits each unless otherwise indicated.

Cantors to Rabbis Required Courses (student has prior MA Degree; Cantorial Ordination from outside of AJR) – 60 Credits:

Bible (8 credits)

Introduction to Parshanut
Electives (6 credits)

Hebrew (7 credits)

Hebrew IIIA (4 credits)
Hebrew IIIB (2 credits)
Liturgical Hebrew (1 credit)

Philosophy (11 credits)

Pluralism
Modern Philosophy
Personal Theology
Medieval Philosophy
Mysticism
Bioethics (1 credit)

Rabbinics/Halakhah (22 credits)

Intro to Mishna
Intro to Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Intermediate Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Advanced Talmud
Intro to Codes
Intermediate Codes
Advanced Codes
Responsa
Midrash

Professional Skills (10 credits)

Conversion (1 credit)
Life Cycles
Education *or* Counseling*
Homiletics (3 credits)
Entrepreneurship

Spirituality (2 credits)

Spirituality elective

* Whether a student needs to take Education or Counseling will be determined in consultation with the Academic Dean.

Cantors to Rabbis + MA Required Courses (student does not have a prior MA Degree in Jewish Studies; Cantorial Ordination from outside of AJR) – 80 credits:

Bible (8 credits)

Introduction to Parshanut
Electives (6 credits)

Hebrew (7 credits)

Hebrew IIIA (4 credits)
Hebrew IIIB (2 credits)
Liturgical Hebrew (1 credit)

History (4 credits)
History Elective
History Elective

Liturgy (4 credits)
Liturgy Elective
Liturgy Elective

Philosophy (11 credits)

Pluralism
Modern Philosophy
Personal Theology
Medieval Philosophy
Mysticism
Bioethics (1 credit)

Rabbinics/Halakhah (22 credits)

Intro to Mishna
Intro to Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Intermediate Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Advanced Talmud
Intro to Codes
Intermediate Codes
Advanced Codes
Responsa
Midrash

Professional Skills (10 credits)

Conversion (1 credit)
Life Cycles
Education *or* Counseling*
Homiletics (3 credit)
Entrepreneurship

Spirituality (2 credits)

Spirituality elective

General Electives (12)**

* Whether a student needs to take Education or Counseling will be determined in consultation with the Academic Dean.

** Note that if the administration determines that there are specific gaps in the student's educational background, they may be required to take specific courses instead of having the choice of general electives.

Cantors to Rabbis Required Courses (Cantorial Ordination & MA Degree from AJR) – 45 Credits:

Bible (8 credits)

Introduction to Parshanut
Electives (6 credits)

Philosophy (7 credits)

Modern Philosophy
Medieval Philosophy
Mysticism
Bioethics (1 credit)

Rabbinics/Halakhah (18 credits)

Intermediate Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Advanced Talmud
Intro to Codes
Intermediate Codes
Advanced Codes
Responsa
Midrash
Midrash 2

Professional Skills (3 credits)

Conversion (1 credit)
Science and Judaism

Spirituality (2 credits)

Spirituality elective

General Electives (7 credits)

Previous Cantors to Rabbis Course Requirements

For students who had earned 16 credits in the Cantors to Rabbis Track at AJR prior to Fall 5785 (2025) and who are not also earning an MA from AJR.

Courses are 2 credits each unless otherwise indicated.

Bible (8 credits)

Introduction to Parshanut
Electives (6 credits)

Hebrew (8 credits)

Hebrew III (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)

Philosophy (11 credits)

Pluralism
Modern Philosophy
Personal Theology
Medieval Philosophy
Mysticism
Bioethics (1 credit)

Rabbinics/Halakhah (24 credits)

Intro to Mishna
Intro to Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Intermediate Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Advanced Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Intro to Codes (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Advanced Codes
Responsa
Midrash

Professional Skills (7 credits)

Conversion (1 credit)
Life Cycles (1 credit)
Education *or* Counseling*
Homiletics (1 credit)
Entrepreneurship

Spirituality (2 credits)

Spirituality elective

* Whether a student needs to take Education or Counseling will be determined in consultation with the Academic Dean.

iii. Scholarship Opportunity

A special scholarship for students enrolled in the Cantors to Rabbis track discounts the part-time tuition to $980 per credit (including courses towards their Ma Degree). Students in the Cantors to Rabbis track are not eligible for additional AJR Institutional financial aid beyond this special scholarship. Students considering full-time study should contact the office for more information.

Non-matriculated (Gesher) students who are ordained/invested cantors and interested in the Cantors to Rabbis track may take up to two trimesters of courses at the discounted rate. After two trimesters, they may continue to take courses at the full tuition rate or apply for matriculation. If accepted, matriculated students in the Cantors to Rabbis track may take all courses at the special rate.

XIX. The Cantorial Program

The Cantorial Program at the Academy for Jewish Religion (AJR) leads to ordination as *Hazzan U-moreh/morah B'Yisrael,* Cantor and Teacher in Israel. The program is designed to train students in developing the Jewish

learning, musical, and professional skills necessary to serve and lead the Jewish community as a cantor. Heir to a tradition of great musical insight and artistry, the modern cantor must also be a professionally trained religious leader and teacher.

It is important to begin planning your cantorial program with your advisor as early as possible.

- Follow a clear timeline, which will outline what you need to accomplish during each trimester
- Monitor cantorial courses taken and assist you in selecting future courses
- Outline the process of creating a well-developed cantorial practicum (Practicum Guide)
- Understand the musical skills program and its requirements (Musical Proficiency Requirements)
- Prepare for the Cantorial Final Comprehensive Examinations, which clear the way for ordination as a professional cantor

A. Program Overview

The goal of the Cantorial Program is to train the future leaders of Jewish prayer in the ancient and traditional musical chant forms, to learn the art of building community through the gifts of music, to raise the cantorial voice in the service of peace and harmony, and to enliven a personal love of the Jewish people. Recognizing the evolving role of the cantor or *hazzan*, who functions as a spiritual leader of the Jewish people, AJR pioneered the full ordination (*semikha*) of cantorial students as *Hazzan uMoreh/Morah b'Yisrael* (Cantor and Teacher in Israel).

Our vision is for the cantor (*hazzan*) to be a living resource of all aspects of Jewish musical tradition with a profound mastery of the melodies and chants for all approaches to Jewish prayer, have proficiency in chanting Torah, *Haftarah*, and the *Megillot* (Scrolls) and knowledge of all aspects of Jewish musical tradition as well as contemporary and world Jewish music repertoire. The contemporary cantor is also charged with leadership and responsibility in many other areas, and must be familiar with classical Jewish texts, Biblical traditions, contemporary Judaic scholarship, education, and the skills of working with individuals and communities in times of joy and sorrow.

We also envision the rabbi and the cantor working with each other as partners, sharing leadership and responsibilities, and recognizing the unique expertise held by each. To enhance mutual understanding, and to foster their common mission of leadership and service, rabbinical and cantorial students study alongside each other to the greatest extent possible. We also anticipate that in some cases a cantor might be the sole spiritual leader of a congregation. The education offered by AJR supports this possibility.

The Cantorial Program revolves around six core goals:

1) Students will demonstrate recognition of the legitimacy of multiple points of view and approaches, both historically in the Jewish tradition and in the interplay of contemporary American, Israeli, and world-wide Jewish communities, movements, and schools of thought.
2) Students will demonstrate strong musicianship skills, mastery of the range of Ashenazic *nusah* and trope systems, and familiarity with Mizrahic/Sefardic *maqamat*.
3) Students will demonstrate a core understanding of the cantor's voice in helping to facilitate peace and understanding within congregations, the larger community, and the world.
4) Students will demonstrate competence in classical and modern Hebrew language along with a core knowledge of biblical, liturgical, and rabbinic texts.
5) Students will demonstrate competence in a range of areas related to professional development: as chaplains, educators, creators of and officiants at life cycle events, and as effective leaders of worship services.
6) Students will demonstrate engagement in the development of their identity as spiritual leaders and spiritual seekers in the Jewish community.

The Cantorial Program includes 140 academic credits (104 credits for the cantorial ordination and 36 credits for the Master's Degree), 4 trimesters of Core Concepts Seminar, two half terms of Clergy Formation Seminar, and 1 unit of CPE required for ordination (see Section XXIII below), successful completion of five comprehensive exams, and successful completion of a number of Ritual Skills (see the Ritual Skills section in this Catalog). Student must also demonstrate proficiency with an instrument.

i. M.A. Requirement

All students in one of AJR's regular Cantorial ordination track (i.e., not Rabbis to Cantors) who have not already earned a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies (or a related field) for which they wrote a thesis or completed a Master's Project are required to complete AJR's Master's Degree in Jewish Studies. *The required credits for AJR's Master's Degree are built into the curriculum of the regular Cantorial ordination track and AJR will continue to transfer credits from all prior graduate level work to fulfill AJR course requirements as applicable* (see Sections IV:G and IV:I for details about transfer credits). Thus, the Master's Project is the only additional element required to earn AJR's Master's Degree beyond the 140 credits that are part of the regular Cantorial Program + MA curriculum. See Section XXI:D for details about the Master's Project.

B. Program Requirements

The Cantorial program consists of 104 credits for the cantorial ordination in addition to 36 credits for the M.A. Degree. Now that we are on a trimester system, the cantorial program may be completed in four years of intense year-round study as long as they are ready to enter Hebrew IIA in beginning their studies at AJR. Others may choose to complete the program in about five years of less full time study; or longer when completed through part time study.

i. Musical Skills

All students entering the Cantorial or *Kol-Bo* Program will be evaluated for their facility with Musical Skills.

Musical Skills Levels I & II are preparatory work. Students will not receive credit for those courses. For the purpose of tuition calculations, Musical Skills Levels I & II are considered equivalent to 2 credit classes. Musical Skills Level III is a credit-bearing course.

By the end of the second year of study, students must have achieved the levels of music proficiency indicated below. Skill mastery may be demonstrated by completing study in an approved musical program. Students with advanced training (preferably at the university or conservatory level), may be exempted from all or part of these requirements. Students seeking exemption will demonstrate their abilities through an AJR Music Competency Examination. Students must have mastered Skill Level III to graduate.

Level I

Ear Training and Music Theory

- Sing, identify by ear, write and play all diatonic intervals, as well as major and minor scales
- Know basic rhythmic patterns
- Sing, identify by ear, write and play major and minor triads and their inversions
- Sight sing a simple melody after a 10 minute preparation

Level II

Ear Training and Sight Singing

- Sing, identify by ear, play and write all diatonic and chromatic intervals as well as major and minor scales
- Sight sing a simple melody (from "*Zamru Lo*") and also play it on piano or instrument of your choice
- Understand and read fluently such rhythmic patterns as triplets, syncopation, and dotted rhythm

Elementary Music and Harmony

- Play, write and identify by ear major and minor triads, 7th chords and their inversions
- Be able to read/play chord symbols (as in "Gates of Song", "Israel in Song") on piano or instrument of your choice
- Write a simple 2-part arrangement of a melody

Beginner Conducting

- Demonstrate basic conducting patterns (2/4, 3/4, 4/4) and techniques (entrance, cut-off, tempo fluctuations)

Level III

Sight Singing and Ear Training

- Sing fluently, on-sight, a congregational melody (as in "Gates of Song" and "*Zamru Lo*") and Cantorial Recitative (selected from Alter or Katchko or similar)

- Sight read a 2-part score (singing one voice and playing the other) with 10 minutes of preparation. This requires familiarity with both treble and bass clef.
- Play a simple 3-part choral score (with preparation at home) on piano
- Transcribe a congregational melody in a given key (a familiar tune such as *Shalom Aleichem*)

Harmony

- Accompany oneself on piano, guitar, etc. (choose your own selection)
- Read chord symbols from a lead sheet and realize on an instrument (as in "Gates of Song" or "*Zamru Lo*")
- Harmonize a simple melody (in 4 voices and with chord symbols)
- Examine a Cantorial recitative and/or choral composition and understand the form, harmonic progression and other expressive means within the work
- Compose and arrange a congregational melody for two-part choir based on an authentic *nusah*

Conducting

- Prepare and conduct a simple 3-part choral score.

Keyboard Proficiency

- As described above in Sight Singing and Harmony requirements:
  - Sight read a 2-part score (singing one voice and playing the other) with 10 minutes of preparation. This requires familiarity with both treble and bass clef.
  - Play a simple 3-part choral score on piano (with preparation at home)
  - Accompany oneself on piano, guitar, etc. (choose your own selection and prepare at home)

Read chord symbols from a lead sheet and realize on an instrument (as in "Gates of Song", "*Zamru Lo*")

C. Cantorial Course Requirement

The following reflects the combined cantorial ordination and M.A. Degree course requirements as of Fall 5785 (2025). Students with over fifty credits prior to Fall 5785 (2025) fall under the old Cantorial Course curriculum (see the "Previous Cantorial Course Requirements" section below).

BIBLE (4 credits)
Introduction to Bible
Bible Elective

HEBREW (25 credits)
Hebrew I (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Hebrew II (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Hebrew IIIA (4 credits)
Hebrew IIIB (2 credits)
Liturgical Hebrew (1 credit)
Biblical Hebrew

HISTORY (8 credits)
Great Ideas and Debates of Jewish History I
Great Ideas and Debates of Jewish History II
American Jewish History, Society, and Culture*
Israel Course

LITURGY (10 credits)
Introduction to Liturgy
Shabbat Liturgy
Festival Liturgy
Yamim Noraim Liturgy
Tefillah and Seminar

PHILOSOPHY (4 credits)
Personal Theology
Pluralism

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS (21 credits)
Pastoral Counseling I
Pastoral Counseling II
Homiletics (3 credit)
Education (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Life Cycle I
Life Cycle II
Fieldwork Support Seminar (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)***
Core Concepts Seminar (4 trimesters, 0 credits, no tuition)
Clergy Formation Seminar (two half-trimesters, 0 credits, no tuition)
Difficult Conversations (1 credit)
Responding to Antisemitism (1 credit)

RABBINICS / HALAKHAH (8 credits)
Introduction to Mishna
Introduction to Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Introduction to Halakhah

SPIRITUALITY (4 credits)
Architecture of Ritual
Sacred Arts

CANTILLATION (6 credits)
Cantillation I: Torah and Haftarah
Cantillation II: Yamim Noraim and Eikhah
Cantillation III: Shalosh Regalim and Esther

NUSAH (25 credits)**
Introduction to Modes (1 credit)
Shabbat I (4 credits)
Shabbat II (4 credits)
Yamim Noraim I (4 credits)
Yamim Noraim II (4 credits)
Shalosh Regalim (4 credits)
Hol and Minor Festivals (4 credits)

PROFESSIONAL CANTORIAL CURRICULUM (11 credits)
Music of the Life Cycle (1 credit)
Musical Skills I (0 credits)
Musical Skills II (0 credits)
Musical Skills III
Music History
Sephardi / Mizrahi Maqamat and Music
Piyyutim
Entrepreneurial Skills

PEACE STUDIES (4 credits)

Introduction to Peace Studies
Music and Conflict Resolution

ELECTIVES (10 credits)**

* Note that students living outside of the United States may take a comparable course in the Jewish History and Culture of their country instead of American Jewish History, Society, and Culture.

** All *nusah* classes meet twice weekly, with one didactic session, and one 'lab/coaching' session to review and hone the application of the material covered. Attendance at both sessions is required.

***Students who opt not to complete 1 unit of CPE will also need to take an additional 2 trimesters of FWSS (no credit, but tuition paid).

**** Note that Hebrew courses cannot count as Electives

Previous Cantorial Course Requirements

Students with 50 credits or more prior to Fall 5785 (2025) fall under the curriculum below:

BIBLE (4 credits)
Introduction to Bible
Parashat Hashavua

HEBREW (27credits)
Hebrew I (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Hebrew II (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Hebrew III (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Biblical Hebrew (2 credits)
Hebrew Phonetics and Morphology (1 credit)

HISTORY (6 credits)
Great Ideas and Debates of Jewish History I
Great Ideas and Debates of Jewish History II
American Jewish History, Society, and Culture*

LITURGY (11 credits)
Introduction to Liturgy
Shabbat Liturgy
Festival Liturgy
Yamim Noraim Liturgy
Tefillah and Seminar (with multiple courses totaling 3 credits)

PHILOSOPHY (4 credits)
Personal Theology
Pluralism

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS (15 credits)
Pastoral Counseling I
Pastoral Counseling II
Homiletics (1 credit)
Education (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Life Cycle I
Life Cycle II
Chaplaincy (1 credit)
Field Work Support Seminar (4 trimesters, 0 credits)
Core Concepts Seminar (4 trimesters, 0 credits)
Difficult Conversations (1 credit)

RABBINICS / HALAKHAH (8 credits)
Introduction to Mishna
Introduction to Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Introduction to Halakhah

SPIRITUALITY (4 credits)
Architecture of Ritual
Sacred Arts

CANTILLATION (6 credits)
Cantillation I: Torah and Haftarah
Cantillation II: Yamim Noraim and Eikhah
Cantillation III: Shalosh Regalim and Esther

NUSAH (25 credits)**
Introduction to Modes (1 credit)
Shabbat I (4 credits)
Shabbat II (4 credits)
Yamim Noraim I (4 credits)
Yamim Noraim II (4 credits)
Shalosh Regalim (4 credits)
Hol and Minor Festivals (4 credits)

PROFESSIONAL CANTORIAL CURRICULUM (14 credits)
Conducting (1 credit)
Music of the Life Cycle (1 credit)
Musical Skills I (0 credits)
Musical Skills II (0 credits)
Musical Skills III
Empowering Community Through Singing (Guitar)
Music History
Sephardi / Mizrahi Maqamat and Music
Piyyutim
Entrepreneurial Skills

PEACE STUDIES (6 credits)

Introduction to Peace Studies
Community Building through Peace Studies
Music and Conflict Resolution

ELECTIVES (10 credits)

* Note that students living outside of the United States may take a comparable course in the Jewish History and Culture of their country instead of American Jewish History, Society, and Culture.

** All *nusah* classes meet twice weekly, with one didactic session, and one 'lab/coaching' session to review and hone the application of the material covered. Attendance at both sessions is required.

D. Comprehensive Exams

All Cantorial students must pass the examinations below by the end of the summer prior to their senior year in order to graduate. It is also possible to take the comprehensive exams as you progress through your program. Only matriculated students are eligible to take comprehensive exams.

Students have access to the Comprehensive Exam Preparation group on Populi, which includes a number of resources for preparing for the Hebrew exams.

Overview of Cantorial Comprehensive Exams

Liturgical Hebrew

A translation of liturgical texts. Hard copy dictionaries and the following digital dictionaries are allowed: Modern Hebrew; BDB; Jastrow.

Nusah HaTefillah

Students are expected to *daven* portions of the liturgy selections directly from a Siddur and/or *Mahzor* that uses the traditional liturgy without the use of notated music. You will be asked to chant any of the following worship services: *Shaharit*, *Minhah*, and *Arvit for* Weekday, Sabbath, Festivals or High Holidays services.

Scriptural Cantillation

There are a total of six systems to be tested. For weekday and Shabbat Torah cantillation only, students will be asked to prepare 25 p'sukim directly from the Torah. The Comprehensive examiner will assign those verses 2 days in advance. For the remaining five systems you will only be asked to chant, on sight, 10 verses from: the Book of the Prophets, Lamentations, Ruth-Ecclesiastes-Song of Songs, Esther, and High Holiday Torah readings.

World Jewish Repertoire

Drawing from the Sabbath, Festival, High Holiday liturgy, Piyyutim, Art Song, and the breadth of World Jewish Music, students will be asked to perform at least three compositions of their own choosing. Students will be evaluated on their mastery of phrasing and interpretation and on their ability to incorporate the composer's musical style. Students will be expected to briefly discuss each composer, musical style and influences, as well as the composition's form and harmonic analysis.

Life Cycle

Students will be asked to chant musical selections from any and all of the following life cycle events:

Brit Milah (other than the zimmun), Simhat Bat (other than the zimmun), Funeral (other than El Malei), Healing Service, Wedding, and Shabbat Home Celebration.

Detailed Nusah HaTefillah Comprehensive Exams

NUSAH HATEFILLAH – Traditional Synagogue Chant

Ability to chant phrases from the *Siddur* and *Mahzor* in authentic *hazzanic* style, drawn from traditional materials listed below. Your examiner will ask you to turn to random selections. We will supply you with an unmarked *Siddur* and *Mahzor* for this purpose when you arrive. In addition to Cantor Sol Zim's anthologies, we recommend use of the Services for *Sabbath Eve and Morning and Three Festivals and Music for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur* by A. Katchko and *Weekday Nusach*, by Pinchas Spiro.

SHABBAT & SHALOSH REGALIM

KABBALAT SHABBAT
Arba'im Shanah (Psalm 95)
Kol Adonai (Psalm 29)

L'kha Dodi (2 Melodies) with 3 verses
Tzaddik Katamar (Western or Eastern – choose one)

MA'ARIV
Barkhu (Western or Eastern – choose one)
Uma'avir Yom (Western or Eastern – choose one)
Ushmor Tzeiteinu (Hashkiveinu) Hatzi Qaddish
Vaykhulu through *Qadsheinu*

MA'ARIV SHALOSH REGALIM
Psalm 92 – *Mizmor Shir* (on Shabbat)
Barkhu
Uma'avir Yom Mi Khamokha Hatzi Qaddish

SHAHARIT
Shokhein Ad through *Hatzi Qaddish Barkhu*
El Adon (choose melody)
Titbarah Tzureinu Or Hadash
Sh'ma & V'ahavta (Torah Cantillation)
G'ulah (*T'hilot L'eil Elyon* through *Tzur Yisrael*) *Amidah*
Avot Ug'vurot Kedushah
Yismah Moshe Qadsheinu Qaddish Shaleim

MUSAF SHALOSH REGALIM

SHAHARIT SHALOSH REGALIM
Ha-el B'ta'atzumot
In *Qedusha: Yimlokh, L'dor Vador, Atah V'hartanu*
Ya'aleh V'yavo
V'hasienu

TORAH SERVICE *SHALOSH REGALIM*
Adonai, Adonai Va'ani T'filati

HALLEL
Transition from end of the *Amidah: Sim Shalom Brakha*
Miqimi Mei'afar Dal
Hodu and *Ana* (Psalm 118) Versions for different festivals
2 melodies from *Hallel* Psalms

MUSAF SHABBAT
M'varkhim HaHodesh Y'hi Ratzon
Mi She-asah Nisim
Rosh Hodesh – announcing
Hatzi Qaddish
U'vyom HaShabbat or *Yismehu*

Hatzi Qaddish, Avot,Tal-Geshem, She'atah Hu
through *Livrakha*

One stanza of *Tal* and one of *Geshem Hoshanot*
(opening 4 phrases) *Umipnei Hata'einu* or *V'hasienu*

MUSAF SHALOSH REGALIM (continued)
Ata Horeita La'da'at Hakafot for *Simhat Torah*
(first two verses)
Calling up the *Hatan Torah/Hatan B'reishit*

***Y'MOT HAHOL* – WEEKDAY**

BIRKHOT HASHAHAR
3 Berakhot P'sukei D'zimra Barukh She'amar
Choose any Psalm (opening/closing)

SHAHARIT
Yishtabah Qaddish / Bar'khu Or Hadash
Amidah – Avot, Kedusha, L'dor Vador Choose one paragraph from *Amidah Tahanun* – opening/ending

TORAH SERVICE
Vay'hi binsoa Gadlu
Hatzi Qaddish

CONCLUDING SERVICE
Ashrei
U'va L'tziyon
Psalm of the Day (choose 1)

MINHA
Ashrei Qaddish
Amidah – through *Qedusha*

MA'ARIV
V'hu Rahum / Barkhu Eil Hay V'kayam
Ki Hamalkhut Shelkha Hi Hatzi Qaddish before *Amidah Qaddish Shalem*
Sefirat HaOmer (Hininei Mukhan / Brakha / counting)

HIGH HOLIDAYS

ROSH HASHANAH EVENING
Barkhu
Uma'avir Yom V'ne'emar Ufros Aleinu
Tik'u Vahodesh Hatzi Qaddish
Qiddush L'Rosh Hashanah (if on Shabbat)
Yigdal

ROSH HASHANAH MORNING
Hamelekh Yishtabah Hatzi Qaddish Bar'khu
Or Olam
T'hilot through *Tzur Yisrael (G'ulah)*
Torah Blessing for *Yamim Nora'im*
Sh'ma / Ehad / Gadlu (Hotza'at Sefer Hatorah) Ashrei Ha'am
Shofar blessings

ROSH HASHANAH MUSAF
Hineni (highlights)
Hatzi Qaddish
Avot through Mi Khamokha Av Harahamim
Unataneh Tokef / B'rosh Hashana Qedushah
V'khol Ma'aminim (1-3 verses)
Uvekhein Ten Pahdekha, Ten Kavod, Tzaddikim
Ohila La'eil
Aleinu
One paragraph from each of the following (beginnings/endings): *Malkhuyot*, *Zikhronot, Shofarot*
Hayom T'amtseinu

KOL NIDRE
B'yeshivah Shel Ma'alah / Kol Nidre through *Shehecheyanu*
2 verses from *Ya'aleh* and *Ki Hineh Kahomer Sh'ma Koleinu*
Eloheinu Tavo through *Ashamnu Al Heyt*

YOM KIPPUR DAY
Avodah service: *V'khakh Hayah Omer* through *V'hakohanim*
Martyrology (choose small section)
Eloheinu….M'hal

N'ILAH
Hatzi Qaddish Avot Ug'vurot
P'tah Lanu Sha'ar Engat M'saldekha Adonai, Adonai Sh'ma through *Adonai Hu Ha'elohim*

E. Vocal Instruction and Musical Skills Training

Vocal instruction and cantorial coaching are integral parts of the professional training of a cantor. All students are urged to take voice lessons every trimester and required to take private cantorial coaching (see below). Your advisor will be available for guidance and will periodically discuss your vocal progress. Students must continue their musical skills training (Levels I, II, & III) until they reach the required standard in the areas of harmony, conducting, sight-singing and ear-training. An intermediate level of keyboard or guitar proficiency will be required, although an alternate instrument may be approved by your advisor.

F. Coaching

In consultation with the Dean of Cantorial Studies every matriculated cantorial or kolbo student is required to be coached by a cantorial instructor in any two of the three trimesters that make up the academic year which begins with the Fall term. To clarify: All cantorial or kolbo students are required to coach in two different trimesters each academic year. The terms do not need to be consecutive. As an example, a student might choose to coach in the Fall and Summer trimesters, the Fall and Spring trimesters, or the Spring and Summer trimesters. This will affect the practica calendar (see section G., below) as each student will set their practicum date in consultation with their coach and the Dean of Cantorial Studies. Students must set a practicum date during one of the trimesters they are signed up for coaching. The fee for coaching through AJR is $900 per trimester. The fee covers 10 private 50 minute sessions. Students may arrange coaching privately in consultation with the Dean of Cantorial Studies. Students coaching privately will be assessed a transfer

credit fee of $200 to have the coaching recorded on the student's transcript. We designate coaches who are not part of the AJR faculty as Offsite Coaches, and you should register for Offsite Coaching (COA999) if you will be working with a cantor who is not part of the AJR faculty.

Before the beginning of each trimester all cantorial and Kol-Bo students will fill out a Coaching Application Form and return it to the Dean of Cantorial Studies for approval. Once approved the coach will be sent a Coaching Agreement Form which names the student(s) who he/she/they will be coaching. For the purposes of clarity: Any coach who is an AJR faculty member will be designated as an onsite coach (whether the coaching takes place at AJR or not). Coaches not formally attached to AJR will be designated as offsite coaches.

Every student must choose a coach to work with. Each student may work with a coach of their choice, whether a member of the AJR faculty or not. All coaches must be approved by the Dean of Cantorial Studies. Your coaching sessions will be carefully monitored during the trimester to make sure you are working toward your practicum date in a timely way and to make sure your progress meets the expectations you and your coach have discussed.

Cancellations, for any reason, must be called in to your coach by 9 AM the day of your coaching session. Otherwise you will have to pay for a make-up session. You must have 10 sessions per trimester. Students coaching privately must have that arrangement approved in advance by the Dean of Cantorial Studies. Please note that, in addition to your coaching at AJR, you are urged to continue your vocal training privately as well.

G. The Cantorial Practicum

A practicum of 20 minutes is required of all matriculated students. In general, students will present their first practicum in the second year of studies. However, in certain cases a newly matriculated student may enter the program with a sufficient knowledge of *nusah* to prepare a practicum in the first year. In those instances the Dean of Cantorial Studies may allow that student to prepare a practicum immediately upon entry. Matriculated Mechina students are not required to give a Practicum, but may speak with the Dean of Cantorial Studies if they are interested. Senior practica are forty minute presentations.

i. Purpose & Expectations

Each matriculated student of the Academy for Jewish Religion Cantorial School is required to present a 20 minute presentation of a specific service for the entire student body, once each school year, on a link provided by AJR. Senior practica will run for 40 minutes.

The practicum program is designed to give a cantorial student the practical experience of leading a portion of *Tefillah* and utilizing and exploring specific liturgy and various musical repertoires.

In the first three years, the program will be a liturgical service. Each student will work with a cantorial coach who will suggest a specific service to focus on. Together, coach and student will craft a service that is performed in a specific style of davening, whether traditional *Nusah* or modern repertoire, or some combination thereof. In subsequent years, the subject of the presentation will be based on a topic selected by the student and the final year will be in recital format. All practica topics need to be approved by the Dean of Cantorial Studies.

Matriculated Cantorial students who have been enrolled for ten years, have a minimum of 90 credits

completed, and are at a level of both musical and cantorial knowledge and competence which will be determined by the Dean of Cantorial Studies, may be eligible to stop coaching and practica until their senior year. There will be no exemption from coaching or the senior practicum in the final year before ordination.

AJR, in consultation with the students in question, will assign dates and times for their practica. This date can only be modified upon extenuating circumstances.

ii. Preparation & Responsibilities

It is strongly suggested that students begin their search for music for their practicum early on. Feel free to consult Jewish musical sources such as current cantors in the field, Jewish music libraries, original compositions, AJR cantorial alumni, etc. It is very important for each student to work on this research together with their coaches and teachers. One of the pedagogical objectives of a practicum is that the students become more familiar with the repertoire on the subject they are planning to perform. It will also help the students learn how to organize the different compositions (their mood, length, etc.). Your coach will guide you to ensure that the material you select is consistent with your vocal and interpretative level at the time.

Please make sure you arrange an appointment with the Dean of Cantorial Studies following your practicum for constructive feedback on your presentation. If necessary, the Dean of Cantorial Studies will have the prerogative of asking the student to repeat all or part of the practicum.

iii. Requirements & Guidelines

Three weeks prior to practicum date, each student must submit (e-mail) a clearly printed draft of their program to the Dean of Cantorial Studies who will review it, make final recommendations and email it back to the student for the final version.

Each student is expected to work with his or her coach on the materials selected and prepare the entire practicum presentation.

Only senior students, in consultation with the Dean of Cantorial Studies, may choose to present a recital of songs on a specific subject instead of a traditional or modern liturgical service.

Students may hire an accompanist for their practica and arrange rehearsal times on their own. It is strongly urged to have multiple rehearsals with your accompanist before your practicum. AJR will provide $50 towards the accompanist fee.

Extra Creativity: You are invited to ask fellow students to perform with you at your practicum – either as singers or instrumentalists.

It is a good idea to plan to perform your program in different settings (synagogues, schools, nursing homes, etc.) before and after the official practicum to become familiar with all the components of the practicum experience.

iv. Printed Practicum Program

Each student is required to have a carefully crafted practicum program with titles and prayers in both

English and Hebrew for distribution at their practicum. Hard copies should be provided to those in the same location as the student giving the practicum. **Care should be taken that all Hebrew (and translations and transliterations) in the program is accurate.**

The program must include names of the prayers and the composers. Please feel free to review sample practicum programs from other students' practica with the Dean of Cantorial Studies

The practicum program should include an attractive cover, as well as programmatic notes. We suggest that you include printed music, along with your practicum program, to encourage group participation.

We also encourage you to hand out more developed musical settings of Jewish music (e.g., 2-4 part harmony).

Please submit a final copy of the printed program to the Dean of Cantorial Studies **at least two weeks before your practicum**.

v. Assigning Specific Dates

The dates of the practica will be assigned by the Dean of Cantorial Studies, who will notify students prior to the Spring trimester. For most dates there will be two cantorial practica.

vi. Attendance & Evaluation

It is important to support fellow students in their work by attending all practica. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn from each other.

Cantorial faculty will submit written comments and evaluations of each practicum. These will be shared with you when you meet with the Dean of Cantorial Studies. Students will be evaluated, in part, upon their ability to engage their audience in singing with them at their practicum presentation.

The Academy community is deeply enriched by the great efforts that our cantorial students apply to practicum preparation. We reap the fruits from all the seeds we have planted. We wish you every success and look forward to an exciting and fruitful year of Torah and Song.

H. Fieldwork and CPE

Students are required to do two trimesters of Fieldwork (see below). Concurrent with this work, students must take two trimesters of Fieldwork Support Seminar (FWSS) in order for their work to fulfill this requirement. Students are also required to complete 1 unit of CPE. If a student chooses not to complete a unit of CPE, they must complete an addition two terms of Fieldwork with FWSS (for no credit).

I. Ritual Skills

Students are required to demonstrate their competence in Ritual Skills by oral examination. Periodically AJR offers Ritual Skills workshops during lunchtime programming in order to help students develop these skills. Testing for Ritual Skills takes place throughout the academic year. Students should contact the Director of Ritual Skills in order to schedule a testing appointment.

Current students have access to a group on Populi called "Ritual Skills," which contains valuable resources and recordings from previous lunchtime Ritual Skills programming that are of help for preparing to fulfill Ritual Skills requirements.

Only matriculated students are permitted to test on Ritual Skills.

J. The Rabbis to Cantors Track

AJR proudly offers rabbis a streamlined but rigorous opportunity to add cantorial ordination to their already impressive mastery of Jewish text and tradition. This track of the Cantorial Program is for those ordained rabbis who are looking for more than just continuing education – it is designed for those seeking intensive pursuit of an additional respected degree.

i. Track Requirements

The Rabbis to Cantors track of the Cantorial Program requires a minimum of 60 credits. In addition, students are responsible for taking the comprehensive exams required of cantorial students, for fulfilling the requisite Ritual Skills requirement, and for performing an annual Practicum.

Students in the Rabbis to Cantors track who did not previously earn a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies (or a related field) are required to complete AJR's Master's Degree, which typically involves an additional 30 credits beyond the basic curricula of this track. Students in the Rabbis to Cantors track who previously completed a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies (or a related field) but did not previously write a thesis or Master's Project are required to complete a Master's Project at AJR and, if they choose to take the additional 30 credits, will also receive a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies from AJR.

Course requirements assume significant competency in areas such as Hebrew, Liturgy, Music Skills 1 & 2, Cantillation 1 (Torah and Haftarah) and facility with an instrument. Proficiency will be evaluated on an individual basis. If necessary, students may be required to take additional courses.

ii. Course Requirements

Hebrew (7 credits)
Hebrew IIIA (4 credits)
Hebrew IIIB (2 credits)
Liturgical Hebrew (1 credit)

Philosophy (2 credits)
Pluralism

Professional Skills (5 credits)
Life Cycles (2 credit)
Entrepreneurship
Responding to Antisemitism (1 credit)

Spirituality (4 credits)
Architecture of Ritual
Sacred Arts

Cantillation (4 credits)
Cantillation II: Yamim Noraim and Eikhah
Cantillation III: Shalosh Regalim and Esther

***Nusah* (25 credits)**
Introduction to Modes (1 credit)
Shabbat I (4 credits)
Shabbat II (4 credits)
Yamim Noraim I (4 credits)
Yamim Noraim II (4 credits)
Shalosh Regalim (4 credits)
Hol and Minor Festivals (4 credits)

Professional Cantorial Curriculum (9 credits)
Music of the Life Cycle (1 credit)
Musical Skills III
Music History
Sephardi / Mizrahi Maqamat and Music
Piyyut

Peace Studies (4 credits)

Introduction to Peace Studies
Music and Conflict Resolution

iii. Scholarship Opportunity

A special scholarship for students enrolled in the Rabbis to Cantors track discounts the part-time tuition to $980 per credit. Students in the Rabbis to Cantors track are not eligible for additional AJR Institutional financial aid beyond this special scholarship. Students considering full-time study should contact the office for more information.

Non-matriculated (Gesher) students who are ordained rabbis and interested in the Rabbis to Cantors track may take up to two trimesters of courses at the discounted rate. After two trimesters, they may continue to take courses at the full tuition rate or apply for matriculation. If accepted, matriculated students in the Rabbis to Cantors track may take all courses at the special rate.

XX. The *Kol-Bo* Program

A. Program Overview

Many spiritual leaders find that they need to serve their congregation as both rabbis and cantors. The *Kol-Bo* program has been created to enable students to earn both rabbinic and cantorial ordinations simultaneously, preparing students to lead their communities liturgically, educationally, and pastorally. Students in this program who plan carefully will be able to complete both ordinations with just one year of additional full-time study.

B. Program Requirements

A total of 160 credits is required for this program (140 credits for the dual ordination and 20 credits for the M.A. Degree). In addition, students must fulfill the various co-curricular requirements of both the rabbinic and cantorial programs, including comprehensive examinations (see the exams listed under both the Rabbinical Program and the Cantorial Program), Ritual Skills requirements (those required of cantorial students; see the Ritual Skills Handbook), 1 unit of CPE (see Section XXIII below), two trimesters of Fieldwork (at least some of which must be in rabbinic and some in cantorial areas) accompanied by FWSS, two half-terms of Clergy Formation Seminar, and yearly Practica (see the section “The Cantorial Practicum”). Student must also demonstrate proficiency with an instrument.

All students in one of AJR's regular ordination tracks (i.e., not Cantors to Rabbis or Rabbis to Cantors), including the *Kol-Bo* Program, who have not already earned a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies (or a related field) for which they wrote a thesis or completed a Master's Project are required to complete AJR's Master's Degree in Jewish Studies. *The required credits for AJR's Master's Degree are built into the curricula of the regular ordination tracks and AJR will continue to transfer credits from all prior graduate level work to fulfill AJR course requirements as applicable* (see Sections IV:G and IV:I for details about transfer credits). Thus, the Master’s Project is the only additional element required to earn AJR’s Master’s Degree beyond the 160 credits that are part of the regular *Kol-Bo* Program + MA curriculum. See Section XXI:D for details about the Master’s Project.

C. Academic Courses

The following reflects the combined Kol-Bo course requirements as of Fall 5785 (2025). Students with over fifty credits prior to Fall 5785 (2025) fall under the previous KolBo curriculum (see below)

Please note: Courses are 2 credits each unless otherwise indicated.

BIBLE (12 credits)
Introduction to Bible
Introduction to Parshanut
Leadership in the Bible/ Nevi'im Rishonim
Electives (6 credits)

HEBREW (25 credits)
Hebrew I (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Hebrew II (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Hebrew IIIA (4 credits)
Hebrew IIIB (2 credits)
Liturgical Hebrew (1 credit)
Biblical Hebrew

HISTORY (8 credits)
Great Ideas and Debates of Jewish History (4 credits)
American Jewish History, Society, and Culture*
Israel Course

LITURGY (10 credits)
Introduction to Liturgy
Shabbat Liturgy
Festival Liturgy
Yamim Noraim Liturgy
Tefillah and Seminar

PHILOSOPHY (11 credits)
Medieval Philosophy
Modern Philosophy
Personal Theology
Mysticism Elective
Pluralism
Bio-Ethics (1 credit)

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS (27 credits)
Pastoral Counseling I
Pastoral Counseling II
Homiletics (3 credit)
Education (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Life Cycle I
Life Cycle II
Conversion (1 credit)
Fieldwork Support Seminar (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)***
Core Concepts Seminar (4 trimesters, 0 credits, no tuition)
Clergy Formation Seminar (two half-trimesters, 0 credits, no tuition)
Difficult Conversations (1 credit)
Musical Skills I (0 credits)
Musical Skills II (0 credits)
Musical Skills III (2 credits)
Music of the Life Cycle (1 credit)
Entrepreneurial Skills
Responding to Antisemitism (1 credit)

RABBINICS/HALAKHAH (22 credits)
Introduction to Mishna
Introduction to Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Intermediate Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Advanced Talmud
Midrash I
Introduction to Codes
Intermediate Codes
Advanced Codes
Introduction to Responsa

SPIRITUALITY (4 credits)
Architecture of Ritual
Sacred Arts

CANTILLATION (6 credits)
Cantillation I: Torah and Haftarah
Cantillation II: Yamim Noraim and Eikhah
Cantillation III: Shalosh Regalim and Esther

NUSAH (25 credits)**
Introduction to Modes (1 credit)
Shabbat I (4 credits)
Shabbat II (4 credits)
Yamim Noraim I (4 credits)

Yamim Noraim II (4 credits)
Shalosh Regalim I (4 credits)
Hol and Minor Festivals (4 credits)

PEACE STUDIES (4 credits)
Introduction to Peace Studies
Music and Conflict Resolution

* Note that students living outside of the United States may take a comparable course in the Jewish History and Culture of their country instead of American Jewish History, Society, and Culture.

**All *nusah* classes meet twice weekly, with one didactic session, and one 'lab/coaching' session to review and hone the application of the material covered. Attendance at both sessions is required.

***Students who opt not to complete 1 unit of CPE will also need to take an additional 2 trimesters of FWSS (no credit, but tuition paid).

Previous Kol-Bo Curriculum
This applies to students who had earned fifty credits prior to Fall 5785 (2025).

Please note: Courses are 2 credits each unless otherwise indicated.

BIBLE (12 credits)
Introduction to Bible
Introduction to Parshanut
Leadership in the Bible/ Nevi'im Rishonim
Electives (6 credits)

HEBREW (27 credits)
Hebrew I (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Hebrew II (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Hebrew III (2 trimesters, 4 credits each)
Biblical Hebrew
Hebrew Phonetics and Morphology (1 credit)

HISTORY (8 credits)
Great Ideas and Debates of Jewish History (4 credits)
American Jewish History, Society, and Culture*
Israeli History, Society and Culture

LITURGY (11 credits)
Introduction to Liturgy
Shabbat Liturgy
Festival Liturgy
Yamim Noraim Liturgy
Tefillah and Seminar (with multiple courses totaling 3 credits)

PHILOSOPHY (11 credits)
Medieval Philosophy
Modern Philosophy
Personal Theology
Mysticism Elective
Pluralism
Bio-Ethics (1 credit)

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS (24 credits)
Pastoral Counseling I
Pastoral Counseling II
Homiletics (1 credit)
Education (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Life Cycle I
Life Cycle II
Conversion (1 credit)
Chaplaincy (1 credit)
Fieldwork Support Seminar (4 trimesters, 0 credits)
Core Concepts Seminar (4 trimesters, 0 credits)
Difficult Conversations (1 credit)
Musical Skills I (0 credits)
Musical Skills II (0 credits)
Musical Skills III (2 credits)
Empowering Community through Singing (Guitar)
Conducting (1 credit)

Music of the Life Cycle (1 credit)
Entrepreneurial Skills

RABBINICS/HALAKHAH (26 credits)
Introduction to Mishna
Introduction to Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Intermediate Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Advanced Talmud (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Midrash I
Introduction to Codes (2 trimesters, 2 credits each)
Intermediate Codes
Advanced Codes
Introduction to Responsa

SPIRITUALITY (4 credits)
Architecture of Ritual
Sacred Arts

CANTILLATION (6 credits)
Cantillation I: Torah, Haftarah, Yamim Noraim (3 credits)
Cantillation II: Shalosh Regalim, Esther, Eikhah (3 credits)

NUSAH ** (25 credits)**
Introduction to Modes (1 credit)
Shabbat I (4 credits)
Shabbat II (4 credits)
Yamim Noraim I (4 credits)
Yamim Noraim II (4 credits)
Shalosh Regalim I (4 credits)
Hol and Minor Festivals (4 credits)

PEACE STUDIES (6 credits)
Introduction to Peace Studies
Community Building through Peace Studies
Music and Conflict Resolution

* Note that students living outside of the United States may take a comparable course in the Jewish History and Culture of their country instead of American Jewish History, Society, and Culture.

**All *nusah* classes meet twice weekly, with one didactic session, and one 'lab/coaching' session to review and hone the application of the material covered. Attendance at both sessions is required.

XXI. The M.A. Program

A. Program Overview

The Academy for Jewish Religion offers a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies. Students may take this degree on its own in order to deepen their knowledge or to further their professional development.

All students in one of AJR's regular ordination tracks (i.e., not Cantors to Rabbis or Rabbis to Cantors) who have not already earned a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies (or a related field) for which they wrote a thesis or completed a Master's Project are required to complete AJR's Master's Degree in Jewish Studies. *The required credits for AJR's Master's Degree are built into the curricula of the regular ordination tracks and AJR will continue to transfer credits from all prior graduate level work to fulfill AJR course requirements as applicable* (see Sections IV:G and IV:I for details about transfer credits). Students in the Cantors to Rabbis or Rabbis to Cantors track who did not previously earn a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies (or a related field) are required to complete AJR's Master's Degree, which typically involves an additional 30 credits beyond the basic curricula of these tracks. Students in the Cantors to Rabbis or Rabbis to Cantors track who previously completed a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies (or a related field) but did not previously write a thesis or Master's Project are required to complete a Master's Project at AJR and, if they choose to take the additional 30 credits, will also receive a Master's Degree in Jewish Studies from AJR.

The M.A. Program revolves around five core goals:

1. Students will demonstrate recognition of the legitimacy of multiple points of view and approaches, both historically in the Jewish tradition and in the interplay of contemporary Jewish movements and schools of thought.
2. Students will demonstrate core knowledge of biblical, rabbinic, and liturgical texts and contemporary scholarship in these areas.
3. Students will demonstrate competence in classical and modern Hebrew language.
4. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the most recent trends and changes in the contemporary Jewish community.
5. Students will demonstrate competence in academic research (including library skills) in order to produce and present graduate-level academic, practical, or educational work.

B. M.A. Course Requirements

The thirty-six credits of required courses – emphasizing Jewish sacred text and issues of the contemporary Jewish community – that make up the Master's Program comprise thirteen courses of two credits each and four courses of one credit each. Most of AJR's courses are two credit courses. For rabbinical and cantorial students, all of the two credit courses count toward their ordination programs. Students may take an additional four credits of electives in the M.A. program to replace the Core Concepts/*Havruta* requirement. The M.A. program may be completed in about 18 - 24 months of study.

C. Required Course Areas (36 Credits)

Students pursuing both Rabbinical and/or Cantorial ordination and AJR's M.A. Degree should see the relevant sub-section on course requirements in the Rabbinical, Cantorial, or *Kol-Bo* Program sections. These sub-sections list all of the courses that students pursuing both ordination and an M.A. Degree must complete. For students pursuing only an M.A. Degree at AJR the following are the required courses:

Sacred Literature – 4 Courses (8 Credits) - At least one course should be in Bible and one in Rabbinic Literature.

Liturgy – 2 Courses (4 Credits)

Pluralism – 1 Course (2 Credits)

History – 2 Courses (4 Credits)

Philosophy – 1 Course (2 Credits)

Spirituality – 1 Course (2 Credits)

Electives – 7 Courses (14 Credits)*

* Note that Hebrew courses cannot count as Electives

i. Hebrew Language Requirement

Students entering with limited Hebrew language facility should plan to take additional courses to complete the program since the coursework for the degree assumes familiarity with basic grammar, the ability to read

unvocalized Hebrew texts, and the ability to understand basic spoken Hebrew. In order to complete the program, students must show Hebrew competency at the level equivalent to the completion of HEB 351 (please contact Rabbi Matthew Goldstone, mgoldstone@ajr.edu, for more details about this Hebrew level). Students not already proficient in Hebrew should be taking these classes during their study at AJR but these courses cannot count as electives.

D. Master's Project

A Master's Project represents the ability of a student to work with academic books and articles toward the creation of a project that applies these in a practical and functional, educational way. Students who wish to create a scholarly study as their Master's Project must demonstrate mastery of the primary sources in their original languages. Students will choose an appropriate advisor with the help of the Director of Master's Degree Projects, Dr. Job Jindo (jjindo@ajr.edu). Such an advisor – who must have the necessary expertise for the particular project – may be chosen from the AJR faculty or from the general community. A $500 advisor's fee will be collected by AJR and the advisor will be paid by AJR. The Academic Dean and the Director of Master's Degree Projects may not serve as advisors.

The Master's Project as part of the AJR M.A. in Jewish Studies fulfills the Master's Project requirement. Students who have earned an M.A. in Jewish Studies at another institution are exempt from the requirement of the M.A. in Jewish Studies at AJR. If their M.A. from another institution included a Master's Thesis then they are exempt from the Master's Project requirement at AJR. If their M.A. did not include a Master's Thesis then they are required to produce a Master's Project as outlined in the sections below. After final editing and approval, the student has the option and is encouraged to present the thesis before students, faculty and administration during a lunchtime program. Presentation dates should be arranged with Cantor Michael Kasper (mkasper@ajr.edu).

For examples of prior Master's Projects, see the AJR website.

i. Master's Project Guidelines

The Master's Project should address a topic that has been a focus of your thoughts and a point of challenge and curiosity over a substantial period of time. The following description and timeline may assist you in the allocation of your time in planning and in producing a quality work. AJR students who have already earned an M.A. in Jewish studies for which they wrote a thesis are exempt from the Master's Project requirement.

ii. Master's Project Description & Requirements

Please remember that a Master's Project takes time and attention. You should approach the project as if you were preparing a document for publication. You are encouraged to submit projects of excellence for publication to respected journals either prior to or after ordination.

A Master's Project consists of the development of an idea or concept that will offer a usable contribution to your community of rabbinical, cantorial and educator colleagues. Master's Projects must have a serious academic research component as well as be reflective of dynamic imagination and creativity.

They should be heavily footnoted from source materials, both primary and secondary. An extensive bibliography should accompany the work. Your project should be in proper English and/or Hebrew, both grammatically correct and fluent. A careful outline will help you to develop a cohesive thought and content pattern. Your project can be in essay form, appear as a developed curriculum or take the form of an instruction manual or guide. Master's Projects typically vary in length from 50 to 100 pages.

Master's Projects should directly address at least three of the M.A. Program Goals, one of which must be the fifth goal ("Students will demonstrate competence in academic research [including library skills] in order to produce and present graduate-level academic, practical, or educational work"). For a list of the other Goals of the M.A. Program, see the M.A. "Program Overview" above or the AJR website.

Keep in mind that, when you present your Master's Project to your fellow students, you must have summarized and abstracted segments of your materials and offer a clear presentation of your core ideas and how they can be used in the field.

As you proceed with your project you may find that what you thought would be one chapter may evolve into an entire paper. You may renegotiate the topic when this occurs. If you think that the project could lead to a substantial book size text, view the project as a publishable article that could act as the forerunner to such a text.

AJR offers the possibility for students to complete a 2 credit independent study with their MA Project advisor to work on their MA Project that will count as a general elective. The fee for this independent study is the regular independent study fee (see above Section IV:F:ii). This independent study is contingent upon the availability of the MA Project advisor. Students interested in this option should speak with the Director of Master's Degree Projects for approval prior to asking their MA Project advisor.

iii. Master's Project Timeline

The timeline below has been updated beginning for the 2025-2026 academic year. Students who were already actively in the process of working on their MA Projects with an advisor prior to the 2025-2026 academic year may adhere to the prior timeline, but are encouraged to try and submit materials according to the updated timeline.

The timeline that is provided below begins with an MA Project Workshop that helps students move from the kernel of an idea to project proposal. Particularly for ordination students, it is recommended that you begin thinking about your topic and consider writing the Master's Project in advance of your penultimate year as there are comprehensive exams and ritual skills requirements that also need to be completed prior to ordination. The timeline should give you an idea of how much time you need to allot to this project. Students planning to complete their Master's Project prior to the year before they graduate do not need to adhere to this timeline.

Timeline in Brief:

- Oct - Jan (year prior to graduation) - MA Project Workshop
- First Week of February (year prior to graduation) - Proposals due
- Beginning of April (year prior to graduation) – Project outline due
- End of August (year prior to graduation) - Full draft due
- End of Oct (senior year) - Revised draft due
- End of Nov (senior year) - Final version due

Detailed Timeline

MA Project Workshop October – January of the academic year *prior to the academic year of graduation/ordination*. Students should participate in the MA Project Workshop in their penultimate year in order to be on track for completing their MA Project. The Workshop typically has 4 sessions:

1) An Overview of the MA Project Requirement (open to all students) – Typically in October or November
2) Types of Projects and Tools / Reviewing student project blurbs – Typically in November
3) Refining the Scope of the Project / Reviewing revised project blurbs – Typically in December
4) Feedback on Student Outlines – Typically in January

Proposal First week of February (year prior to anticipated Ordination/Graduation)

Your Master's Project topic should be chosen, formally submitted in writing with goals and methodology clearly delineated and approved with an advisor selected and invited to work with you.

The topic for your project and your advisor must be approved by the Director of Master's Degree Projects, please be in touch with Dr. Job Jindo. Approval should be confirmed before the student formally invites an advisor, so that the student can receive guidance on the suitability of both the topic and the advisor.

Advisors do not have to be from the AJR faculty but should be respected as experts in the area chosen. Please note that a proposal consists of:

A title

A one - two sentence synopsis of the specific question that the paper will answer or the specific issue that the paper will investigate

Background and additional information – several paragraphs

Outline Beginning of April (year prior to graduation)

Submit an extensive outline of your project, citing several of the sources on which you will be drawing as well as your proposed meeting schedule with your chosen advisor. The submission of this outline assumes that you have done substantive reading and have acquired enough sources to write an informed outline.

First Draft End of August (year prior to graduation)

Submit the first draft of your paper to the Director of Master's Degree Projects and to your advisor for review and comment. It may take your advisor some time to review the draft and so it is important to get this draft in on time so that you have time to make any revisions based on their comments for the revised draft.

Second Draft End of October (senior year)

Submit the second draft of the project. This should be a polished draft. The date of submission will give your advisor and the Director of Master's Degree Projects substantial time to review the work.

Final Editing End of November (senior year)

November is set aside for editing and final revisions. Oral presentations will take place during several lunch sessions between January and April. Your presentation time is one-half hour.

iv. Advisor Guidelines

It is assumed that your Master's Project Advisor is an expert in your chosen subject area and a guide who will help you through this process. Please consider these guidelines prior to beginning your project and after your advisor has been approached and has accepted their role:

Arrange an extended meeting to brainstorm your ideas and your proposed methodology.

Take notes on suggested materials and references.

Arrange a timeline including dates by which you will submit segments of your project to your advisor and dates by which they will be returned to you for emendations and editing. While each segment is being edited, you should continue your research and writing.

AJR charges a $500 Master's Project Fee to provide an honorarium to advisors. However, given the amount of time and energy involved in serving as an advisor for a Master's Project, some students and/or advisors feel that it is appropriate for students to provide additional monetary compensation. Students are free to negotiate this issue directly with advisors and may come to private arrangements beyond the $500 compensation facilitated through AJR. Please note that any additional arrangement that students and advisors may choose to agree to are independent of, and do not impact, AJR tuition and fees.

v. M.A. Project Rubric

This rubric is for general guidance. All M.A. Projects are graded as Pass/Fail. Any project that contains <u>any</u> element in any of the categories labelled "Unacceptable/Needs Much Improvement" will not receive a passing grade and must be returned to the student for revision.

	Excellent	Acceptable	Unacceptable/Needs Much Improvement
Practicality/ Educational Value	Of obvious and important practical use to rabbinical, cantorial, and/or educator colleagues	Of practical use to rabbinical, cantorial, and/or educator colleagues	Of little practical use to rabbinical, cantorial, and/or educator colleagues
Scholarly	Sophisticated understanding of the original languages of the sources; Superior understanding of the historical, literary, and religious background of the texts presented; Outstanding academic merit of the project	General understanding of original languages of the sources; Adequate understanding of the historical, literary, and religious background of the texts presented; Satisfactory academic merit of the project	Inadequate understanding of original languages of the sources; Inadequate understanding of the historical, literary, and religious background of the texts presented; Little academic merit of the project

Required Format	Academic language used throughout; Grammatically correct; Heavily footnoted in proper format; Extensive bibliography in proper format; Relevant and wide-ranging review of the literature ; Typically 50-100 pages long; Addresses M.A. Goal #5 and at least two others.	Academic language mainly used; Mostly grammatically correct; Adequately footnoted in proper format; Adequate bibliography in proper format; Review of the literature is adequate; Typically 50-100 pages long; Addresses M.A. Goal #5 and two others.	Colloquial language mainly used; Numerous grammatical mistakes; Inadequately footnoted or in improper format; Inadequate bibliography or in improper format; Review of the literature is inadequate; Does not address M.A. Goal #5 and/or addresses fewer than two others.
Writing Skills	Main argument very clear; Writing flowed smoothly from one idea to another; Clear organization of material throughout; Presents a clear articulation of the methodology used; Length is sufficient to fully explore topic; Conclusion is very clear	Main argument is fairly clear; Writing mostly flowed smoothly from one idea to another; Mostly clear organization of material; Presents a mostly clear articulation of the methodology used; Length is basically sufficient to explore the topic; Conclusion is clear	Main argument is not sufficiently clear; Writing mostly does not flow smoothly form one idea to another; Organization of material lacking; Inadequate articulation of the methodology used; Length insufficient to explore the topic; Conclusion is insufficiently clear
Graduate Level Research Skills	Data drawn from many sources; Excellent critical synthesis of the review of the literature; Analysis of data is logical and sophisticated and considers more than one side of an argument; Consistent critical connections made between evidence and argument; Conceptual framework is clear and relevant throughout	Data drawn from several sources; Adequate critical synthesis of the review of the literature; Analysis is mostly logical and sophisticated and occasionally considers more than one side of an argument; Conceptual framework is mostly clear and relevant	Data drawn from too few sources; Inadequate critical synthesis of the review of the literature; Analysis not as logical and sophisticated as it ought to be and rarely considers more than one side of the argument; Conceptual framework is not as clear or as relevant as it ought to be.
Imagination/ Creativity	Innovative and original conceptual approach to the topic; Creative methodology or design of the project; Overall presentation is engaging and thought-provoking; Draws original and thoughtful conclusions.	Interesting conceptual approach to the topic; Somewhat creative methodology or design of the project; Overall presentation is somewhat engaging and thought-provoking; Draws somewhat original	Stereotypical and clichéd approach to the topic; Unoriginal methodology or design of the project; Overall presentation is not engaging or thought-provoking; Draws unoriginal, derivative, or banal conclusions

		and thoughtful conclusions	

XXII. Fieldwork Requirements for Ordination Students

A. Introduction

An essential complement to the rigorous AJR academic program is a supervised, diversified field experience in the full range of rabbinical or cantorial responsibilities.

1) While volunteer or paid experience in the field is encouraged throughout a candidate's education, two trimesters of fieldwork experience earned concurrently with taking the AJR Fieldwork Support Seminar (FWSS) is required for ordination. Fieldwork Support Seminar is a supervised professional development forum for students to present issues that have arisen in their fieldwork experience and to derive support, perspective, and guidance in how to proceed.
2) Each fieldwork trimester must be composed of at least eleven weeks, with an average of ten hours per week at a single location. For Fieldwork conducted in an immersive experience (i.e., camp) students may do a minimum of 5.5 weeks rather than 11 weeks. Only one of the two required trimesters of fieldwork may be performed in such an immersive environment.
3) Experience earned prior to entering AJR cannot be used to fulfill this requirement.
4) Any position held while a student is enrolled in *Mechina* or as a *Gesher* student may not count toward the fieldwork requirement. As a rule, first year students' work does not count toward fieldwork. In extenuating circumstances, the Director of Fieldwork (Rabbi Jeffrey Segelman, jsegelman@ajr.edu) may make an exception.
5) It is the responsibility of the student to complete the fieldwork as agreed upon with the site supervisor and the Director of Fieldwork in order to fulfill the Fieldwork Support Seminar requirement.
6) Ultimate responsibility for attaining these positions rests with the student.
7) If there is no supervision onsite at a fieldwork placement, it is the responsibility of the student to make provisions for that supervision (please note that students may have to pay for such supervision) and the supervisor has to be approved by Director of Fieldwork.

E. Requirements for Participating in Fieldwork

Prior to beginning fieldwork, students should have fulfilled the following requirements:

- Be at or above the level of HEB 351: Hebrew 2B or above
- Have completed 2 credits of Homiletics
- Have completed Life Cycle I and II
- Have completed all of the Unit א Ritual Skills

For exceptional cases, please speak with the Director of Fieldwork (particularly for any students on the pre-2025 curriculum that requires fewer credits of Homiletics and Life Cycles).

C. Congregational Fieldwork

AJR ordinees are viewed by prospective employers as capable of serving in the full spectrum of rabbinic and cantorial duties. Accordingly, one trimester must, and both can, be fulfilled by congregational placements as *kol-bo* or assistant rabbi or cantor, concurrent with participation in FWSS. (Minimum average of ten hours/week – see Section XXII:A2 above). Fieldwork should include, but is not limited to, leading services, giving sermons or *Divrei Torah*, public reading from the Torah, teaching adult education, officiating at life cycle events, and attending synagogue committee meetings.

Fieldwork supervision should be provided by professional clergy, ordained or invested with a minimum of five years of experience. In the case of solo clergy, an arrangement must be made to match the student with an appropriate professional for supervision. The expectation is that there will be a supervisory meeting no less than once every two weeks, and that the supervisor will make an on-site visit once a trimester.

In occasional situations, exemption from congregational training may be granted. In such cases, the following reduced congregational awareness program will be required and reviewed by the student's advisor:

1) Students will find a rabbi/cantor (as appropriate) to mentor them and the students will attend their congregations for six full Sabbaths finding the opportunity to lead or assist in some capacity.
2) Experience must include the following: Giving three sermons/*Divrei Torah* and reading Torah, four adult education sessions, attending/shadowing clergy for one wedding, one funeral, one naming, one circumcision, and attending a meeting of each of the following: the Board of Directors, the Ritual Committee, and the Executive Committee.
3) Both the student and mentor will be asked to complete a written evaluation upon the fulfillment of this module.

D. Other Modalities

AJR is mindful of the different ways today's Jewish community is served by clergy. No longer are synagogue structures the only setting for Jewish worship and identity building. The placement office encourages students to think "out of the box" in the ways they envision their form of clergy service. AJR will work with students to create a fieldwork experience that meets the requirements of the school as well as the professional interests of the students. Specialized fieldwork formats have included settings that promote social justice and environment issues, holistic settings that promote spiritual and community interests with body mindfulness; more informal settings of retreats and community centers, Jewish communal service and alternative education settings.

There are a number of non-congregational settings for fieldwork that have qualified, when comprised of a minimum of ten hours per week together with FWSS:

i. Religious School Principal, Director of Education or Director of Congregational Learning
ii. Hillel Director, Hillel Rabbi, Hillel Assistant Director
iii. Position at a JCC, Jewish Federation, Jewish youth movement or other Jewish agency that requires the development and demonstration of the major skills required of a rabbi or cantor in their professional career
iv. Chaplain (hospital, prison, hospice, etc.)

Please note that religious school teaching positions are <u>not</u> eligible to meet the fieldwork requirement.

E. Procedures for Receiving Fieldwork Credit

The following procedures are necessary to receive fieldwork credit:

1) AJR students must prepare a description of positions intended for fieldwork credit and submit these for approval to the Director of Fieldwork as part of the registration process each trimester. The Fieldwork Approval Request form may be found here.
2) Each student and supervisor will work on a learning plan for which AJR will supply a template. The plan is designed to be filled out jointly, by the student and the supervisor, and will guide the student's learning goals during the placement period.
3) The Director of Fieldwork will maintain ongoing contact with the Fieldwork Supervisor. Formal feedback is offered via a zoom session for supervisors (held in the beginning part of the fall trimester). At the beginning of each trimester supervisors and students will jointly fill out a learning plan (to be sent by the Director of Fieldwork). Additionally, at the end of each trimester in which the student participated in FWSS, the supervisor will be expected to fill out a formal evaluation of the student's work and progress. Students will have an opportunity to read the supervisor's remarks and discuss them prior to signing off on the written evaluation. All evaluations will be sent to the Director of Fieldwork.

XXIII. Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)

Beginning in Fall 2025, all ordination students are required to complete 1 unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). The CPE program, whether local to the student or online-based, must be accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by AJR and approved in advance. A copy of the CPE application/registration form or information listing the sponsoring agency, the institution that will serve as the practice site, and the name of the supervisor should be filed with the Director of Fieldwork. In order to fulfill this requirement once the unit of CPE is completed, students must submit their certificate of completion as well as their final evaluation to the Academic Dean.

Students may choose to pursue more than 1 unit of CPE during their time at AJR. However, additional units of CPE do not fulfill the fieldwork requirement (see above). Up to two additional units of CPE can be applied as academic transfer credit in the area of professional skills. Each additional CPE unit will receive two credits.

Students who do not complete a unit of CPE

Although AJR requires ordination students to complete 1 unit of CPE. However, in some circumstances this may not be possible. If a student does not complete a unit of CPE, then they will be required to complete two additional trimesters of fieldwork and FWSS (for no credit but with tuition). At least one of those two trimesters of fieldwork must be in a chaplaincy setting.

XXIV. Placement

The Director of Placement is available to assist matriculated ordination students in finding work experiences, whether for income or for the acquisition of skills. Experiences within Jewish settings or related to general clergy function will be disseminated in regular employment opportunity updates sent to the student body. The placement office works with both students and alumni for employment needs. At

times, the Director of Placement will be in touch with the supervisors of our students in order to monitor students' progress.

A. Placement Procedure

Once the student is ready to seek a position, they should make an appointment with the Director of Placement. At that time, together they will review the resume and past professional experience to assess skills and discuss goals in placement. All pulpit or clergy-related work obtained through the placement office requires that students be vetted by faculty to ensure that they are ready to undertake the position and to safeguard AJR standards. We consider it part of our process of caring for students and educating students to make sure that they are in positions that suit their strengths and academic progress. There may be times that students desire positions that the Director of Placement feels they are not ready for. In those cases, we urge students to have conversations with the Director of Placement to work together to make decisions and to help the student grow and develop professionally.

The Director of Placement will maintain copies of the student's resume, and, if applicable, audio or video recordings. Resumes and recordings are sent with a personalized cover letter from the Placement Office describing both AJR and the candidate. Cantorial students should include a range of several vocal selections.

The Director of Placement and Director of Fieldwork frequently collaborate to assist students in securing appropriate positions that will complement their coursework and support their professional growth. Positions that are related to fieldwork for ordination students will be formally monitored and evaluated in conjunction with the student, the fieldwork supervisor, and the Director of Fieldwork. This will be done mid-way and at the end of the academic year through a written-evaluation form and follow-up conversations between the supervisor and the Director of Fieldwork. Students will sign off on the evaluation form and have the opportunity to comment and elaborate on the experience.

B. Placement Leads and Referrals

Placement leads are procured in a variety of ways. The Director of Placement works with a network of professionals, lay leaders, and alumni who make referrals. Calls are made to introduce AJR to synagogues in desired geographic areas. Websites for professional employment, organizational listservs, and other resources are reviewed regularly. Students are encouraged to use their own resources and networks to find positions and to share information with the Director of Placement even if not applicable to their situation.

A lead remains "exclusive" to the individual only as long as it is not public information. Once a lead is obtained, detailed intake conversations determine the needs of the institution and establish a relationship. The intake form notes the history and background of the congregation, its current composition and orientation, description of the position, and the qualifications sought in an applicant.

The contact person and the student are notified when resumes are sent by the Director of Placement. Referral to a position is made based on knowledge of a student's skills, religious comfort level, preference and location. AJR tries to facilitate placements that best match the student's qualifications and preferences with those of the organizations seeking candidates for a position. Follow up contacts are made after an interview with both applicant and institution. Students and the Director of Placement will have regular contact and opportunity for conversation throughout the placement process, which will include interview preparedness and debriefing. Students should expect honest feedback and constructive criticism as part of the placement process and as a means to improve and strengthen interview and presentation skills.

XXV. Student Contract of Employment for Ordination Students

This policy applies to all rabbinical/cantorial positions held by students, whether or not the position is a part of the Fieldwork Program.

AJR students have primary responsibility for the courses in which they are registered. Duties to congregations or other agencies must be secondary to student obligations in all but the most exceptional circumstances. AJR senior staff will support students in negotiating this issue with employers.

Students obtaining work within the Jewish community should review a potential position with the Director of Placement. Any proposed contract or Letter of Employment should be submitted before a student enters a commitment with a congregation or agency.

A student who has too much time committed to work may not be able to handle a full course-load, and thus should be aware that the duration of study may be increased.

AJR will not sanction contracts/positions that require students to work during AJR-required programs such as the Gatherings and ordination, and during class time for courses in which students are enrolled.

AJR students who are not already Jewish clergy should not be installed as an institution's "rabbi" or "cantor." Installation as a professional member of the clergy with the ordained role that a student is pursuing at AJR should take place only after ordination.

AJR ordination students, who are not already ordained/invested Jewish clergy, are not permitted to play any part in intermarriage ceremonies. Whether or not to participate in intermarriage ceremonies is an extremely delicate and complex question. It relates to several significant areas of Jewish law and custom and it potentially affects the Jewish religious lifestyle and identity of multiple generations. For these reasons, AJR requires its rabbinical and cantorial students who do not already hold a Jewish ordination to wait until they have been ordained, and have therefore completed their training, before deciding whether to participate in intermarriage ceremonies. Nevertheless, AJR ordination students may play a part (e.g., teaching, preaching, singing) at a gathering that precedes the ceremony or at a reception that follows the ceremony. What is not permitted to ordination students who are not already ordained/invested Jewish clergy is participating in any way in an intermarriage ceremony itself.

XXVI. Gatherings

Historically, AJR has held a Fall and Spring Gathering (previously known as Retreat and Intensive). In keeping with tradition but thinking forward for the present and future we are changing both the names and foci of these two school-wide events. The Fall Gathering and its counterpart, the Spring Gathering, will be joined by the common threads of community building and a deep exploration into the personal meaning the titles Cantor, Rabbi, and *Kol-Bo* suggest.

Both events will begin on a Sunday, end on a Wednesday, and be held off campus, at a hotel. These will be times to meet in person, renew acquaintances, deepen friendships, connect with faculty, and do the work necessary to grow into clergy the Jewish people deserve. AJR is committed to the psycho-spiritual as well as academic development of all its students. These four day opportunities are an integral part of that promise.

The Gatherings are integral and crucial parts of preparation for ordination. Consequently, all matriculated ordination students, including those who are on "maintain matriculation" status, are required to participate in the full program in person. M.A. students and non-matriculated students are warmly invited to attend. Gathering attendance for ordination students, including a description of the topic(s) covered, will be recorded on the student's transcript. It is hoped that this will make an impact on potential employers. Only students attending the full Gathering program will have attendance and the topic recorded on their transcript.

Participation in AJR's Gatherings is an essential component of AJR's ordination programs and waivers for attendance will only be granted in extremely dire circumstances (particularly in the case of health concerns). Note that a full-time job does not count as a dire circumstance, students are expected to arrange their schedules so as to be able to attend these two in-person essential programs. For those students granted a waiver for extenuating situations please note that there will be a required online make-up program, which requires a programming fee (see Section XI above).

Unless a student requests a private room (for an additional fee), AJR coordinates rooming assignments for students at the Gathering. AJR assumes that Jewish ethics concerning relationships will guide students' conduct, including students' requests for roommates. As a general rule, AJR asks that students of different gender identities not room together for reasons of *mar'eit ayin*. If you feel that this policy should not apply to you because you are married or in a life partnership that does not include legal marriage or for any other reason, you must discuss with Cantor Michael Kasper or Rabbi Jill Hammer. In the case of gender queer or transgender students, or students in transition, sensitive and confidential attention will be paid to the comfort of the student as well as potential roommates.

Special and creative *tefillot* are an important part of AJR programming. If a student needs a document photocopied for use during *tefillot* at Gatherings, the AJR office will photocopy the document for all participants if it is up to 10 pages and it is submitted to the office no later than two weeks before the program. If the document is more than 10 pages, our preference is that the document be submitted electronically to the office and it will be projected onto a screen during the service.

XXVII. Clergy Formation

Over the course of their studies at AJR, all ordination students are expected to engage in the process of clergy formation:

The development of a mature sense of *shliḥut*/mission—that is, a sense of what we are committing to as Jewish clergy, and why we are making that commitment to living in the presence of God in service to the Jewish people, and the world. This sense of purpose should be well-thought-out and well-integrated into the clergy student's life, and the clergy student should be developing the intellectual, emotional and spiritual qualities and skills to implement their vision, in an ongoing way.

As a part of the process of clergy formation, AJR expects students to particularly focus on developing or enhancing the following areas:

In the human realm:

Maturity of self-knowing and self-reflection

A high standard of ethics

The ability to manifest principled humility

Curiosity about the experience of others

In the intellectual realm:

Maturity of thought, such that one's beliefs and approaches to Jewish tradition are carefully considered

A commitment to continual learning of Torah and Jewish tradition

A desire to constantly broaden one's knowledge beyond the familiar

In the pastoral realm:

Maturity of one's inner life such that the candidate is able to wisely negotiate clergy roles and interactions

A willingness to serve the Jewish community and the individuals in it

An understanding that the role of clergy is to comfort and bring compassion to others

Respect for the multiplicity of approaches to Jewish tradition

In the spiritual realm:

Maturity of spiritual life, such that one is able to formulate a coherent and considered expression of relationship with God as one understands God

The ability to negotiate an effective interface, in prayer and other sacred practice, between personal experience and communal service

Over the course of matriculated ordination students' time at AJR, the faculty and administration will devote special attention to assisting students in continuing on this process of formation. This dedication of time and energy is specifically for matriculated ordination students and is not applicable to *Gesher* students and students solely enrolled in the Master's Degree Program. At present, AJR offers each matriculated ordination student (including those in the Cantors to Rabbis track) an opportunity to meet with two administrators for 45 minutes each year to discuss their personal formation struggles and growth. In addition, AJR has recently added Formation seminars as a required part of the regular ordination programs. Clergy formation is a lifelong process and thus Cantors to Rabbis Track students are also expected to engage in a rigorous process of formation, as are AJR alumni, who are greatly encouraged to find opportunities to continue their personal growth in this area.

XXVIII. Student Life

A. *Tefillah* at the Academy for Jewish Religion

Among the most important functions of rabbis and cantors is structuring and leading prayer opportunities in a variety of contexts. *Tefillah* is central to the AJR community, both as an opportunity to fulfill our own spiritual needs, and as a laboratory for future clergy to hone their skills as prayer leaders.

As befits a pluralistic institution, *Tefillot* at AJR include a variety of styles, using a variety of prayer books and liturgies, giving members of the AJR community the opportunity to learn about the wide spectrum of Jewish contemporary prayer practice.

Minhah is held every Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday when classes are in session, beginning at 3:30pm ET and concluding by 3:50pm ET. *Shaharit* also takes place periodically, and additional communal *tefillah* experiences take place during the weeks of the Gatherings.

The following are some core guidelines for those who are leading *tefillot* at AJR, and some suggestions.

Core guidelines:

1. Let people know what to expect, orally or in writing, so they can make decisions about how to participate in a way that will be comfortable for them. Indicate what siddur (if any) you plan to use and what *tefillot* you plan to do. You are also welcome to share some thoughts about how and why you have assembled the service as you have.
2. AJR permits assembling a minyan over Zoom, as long as at least ten participants have their cameras on. Prayers that traditionally require a minyan (the various versions of *Kaddish*, *Kedusha*, *Barekhu*) should be done only if there are ten participants with their cameras on.
3. Every service should include a *Kaddish Yatom* (if there are ten participants with their cameras on) or an alternative to the *Kaddish Yatom* (if there are fewer than ten participants with their cameras on).

   Options for an alternative *Kaddish Yatom* have included Psalm 23 in Hebrew or English, other psalms, English readings in *Siddur Kol Haneshamah*, prayers from RitualWell.org, the prayer in place of *Kaddish* in *Siddur Lev Shalem* (p. 30). These alternatives could be sung, or recited, in Hebrew and/or in English. Prayer leaders should have one of these options ready in case it is needed (but it usually is not).

4. *Tefillot* should begin and conclude on time. We typically begin Minhah one minute after the time is scheduled. Because of classes that begin immediately after Minhah, we ask that leaders ensure that we are concluded by the concluding time. Being mindful of time while serving as a spiritual leader is a difficult but important rabbinical and cantorial skill that our students have the opportunity to hone.
5. The Jewish world has a broad range of musical traditions attached to *tefillah*. At AJR we respect the system of *Nusah* which reserves certain melodies for certain occasions. All things being equal, we encourage the use of weekday melodies for weekday *tefillah* unless the prayer leader has a reason to do otherwise.
6. Periodically during the year, and every Gathering, AJR holds *Shaharit* services. *Shaharit* on Mondays, Thursdays, and other days on which Torah is read should generally include a Torah reading component. If students leading *Shaharit* on a Torah reading day are interested in alternatives that do not include Torah reading, they should speak with the administration in advance.

Beyond these guidelines, our services embrace the wide range of religious practice in the AJR community. We encourage *tefillah* leaders to be creative and thoughtful in crafting your service. Leaders are welcome to use the text as found in any siddur of their choice, or departing from the language in their siddur of choice when there is a reason to do so, or doing a service that is not bound to the liturgy in any siddur. Attending Minhah a few times before leading will give potential leaders a sense of some of the varied approaches that Minhah leaders take to *tefillah* at AJR.

Among the core values of the AJR community, in all areas of life at AJR including *tefillah*, is egalitarian participation in all areas of Jewish life for people of all genders.
All of our administration and faculty members are happy to help guide students who are looking for help in preparing a service; please approach these teachers. Rabbi-In-Residence, Rabbi Rob Scheinberg is especially involved with prayer life at AJR, and is happy to consult with students who desire some guidance. This guidance can refer to melodies, structuring a service, etc.
If a *sheliah/shelihat/shelihei tsibbur* makes an error of some kind in the course of the prayers, Rabbi Rob Scheinberg will convey that to the person in private. Other faculty members or students should speak to Rabbi Scheinberg if they have a concern, rather than approaching a prayer leader directly. Our goal is to provide a gentle and supportive learning environment.

B. Lunchtime Programming

Students are encouraged to attend lunchtime programming which includes communal conversations, visiting speakers, new student check-ins, practica, and much more. These programs are of great value to the education of students, and add to our sense of community. Many recordings of lunchtime programs are archived in Populi in a group called "Lunchtime Programs."

C. Email

The majority of communication between the AJR Administration and students takes place through email. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the Administrative Office has a working email address and that the email account is checked regularly. Students are expected to be responsive to AJR communications.

Students in leadership positions are required to vet all communication using the AJR logo with the AJR administration prior to sending.

Communications to AJR lists from students in leadership positions should not be sent on Shabbat and holidays. This includes second and eighth days of holidays (including *Rosh Hashanah*, *Sukkot*, *Simhat Torah*, *Pesah*, and *Shavuot*) whether or not the student personally observes those days. In addition to the email lists that the school uses for regular communication with the students, there are additional lists maintained for other purposes:

AJR sends a weekly *D'var Torah* to our community. You will be automatically added to this email list.

The AJR Community Conversations ("One-list") listserv provides a way for students and alumni to pose questions and discuss current issues. Guidelines for AJR's Community Conversations listserv can be found here and below:

1. Purpose

   We have created this sacred space to share the wealth of our diverse experiences, to strengthen the bonds of our community, and to provide a forum for questions and insights. We encourage inquiries about texts and ideas, requests for prayers and healing, announcements about upcoming events, and other posts that would be of interest to the large and diverse group of current AJR students, faculty, administration, Board members, and alumni on this list.

2. Tone

One should always be thoughtful with their words, for the world was created through speech (Gen. 1) and evil speech is equated with the three gravest sins (t. Peah 1). In posting on our listserv, we ask that you always adopt a respectful tone and keep the following in mind:

- Speak for yourself and not others - We greatly value your opinion, but we also cherish the diversity of views held by members of our community.
- When responding to others, give them the benefit of the doubt, as it says, "judge everyone on the side of merit" (Avot 1:6).
- Polemics, vitriol, and disrespectful language have no place within our community, nor does attacking others for their views.

3. Topics

Just as each of the biblical chieftains provided 70 shekalim to support the Mishkan (Num. 7:10), from which we derive that there are 70 faces to Torah (Num. Rab. 13:16), so too as we contribute to this community our words should make space for the variety of our diverse voices.

We promote a safe and confidential space in which all members should feel comfortable sharing their political, religious, and personal views. Controversial topics should be shared in ways that foster productive dialogue rather than simply sparking disagreement. Sharing current events should be for the sake of engaging in dialogue that elevates our religious and spiritual lives.

4. Posting

There is a time to speak and a time to remain silent (Eccl. 3:8) and we encourage everyone to remain attuned to when and how much they share. We also ask that responses to posts be directed solely to the sender (without "replying all") unless your remarks are pertinent for the group as a whole.

Feel free to promote your own projects and events but please limit such sharing to a single post.

To ensure the continual vibrancy of our community conversations, the AJR administration reserves the right to remove members from the list whose tone, language, or frequency of posting violates the values underlying this space.

The Student Association also maintains a list for communications among the student body. To join this list, please contact the president of the Student Association, who will direct you to the proper person. Please note that the administration is not included in the distribution of the Student Association email list. If you wish any member of the administration to be informed of something communicated on this list, you must specifically type in that address.

D. Volunteerism at AJR

AJR students are our face to the public and serve as ambassadors to help showcase our school and community. It is the contributions of our generous and dedicated corps of volunteers that help make each communal event at AJR run successfully.

Gatherings rely on student volunteers for *Tefillah*, cabaret, hospitality, and other aspects. New students are mentored by student volunteers.

The Student Association also has volunteer opportunities that contribute to the quality of the student environment.

Volunteering is a strong AJR tradition that enriches student life and enhances your student experience.

E. Madrikh Program

The AJR Madrikh program pairs new students and a veteran, one who will make the transition into academic studies and school culture easier. If you are interested in the *Madrikh* program, please be in touch with Cantor Michael Kasper (mkasper@ajr.edu).

XXIX. Guidelines for Emergencies at AJR

Although most students attend AJR classes and programs online, AJR staff come to the AJR campus each week. The following guidelines apply for staff, students, and visitors who come onsite to AJR's campus.

A. Reporting a Fire

Every year AJR will distribute an annual Safety and Fire Report to all students which includes details relevant to fire safety and evacuating AJR.

Notify those in your immediate surrounding to leave the building. Pull the nearest fire alarm and once outside the building dial 9-1-1 reporting to the operator that you pulled the alarm and what you believe the problem to be.

B. Fire Alarms

When the fire alarm sounds, it is your responsibility to leave the building immediately. Although some fire alarms are false, you must treat every fire alarm as if a real fire is occurring. Our building houses various offices including Contrafect Corporation, a commercial lab.

C. Exiting the Building

In addition to the main entrance and stairwell, there is an Emergency Exit door and stairwell next to classroom 3. In an emergency, all should exit through the closest open exit. In the event of a fire emergency, any student or faculty member who is in the vicinity of the *Beit Midrash* is asked to take the Torah outside with them if they can safely do so.

D. Once Outside the Building

All AJR students and faculty will meet opposite the building's main entrance under the overhang. This will allow us to account for everyone.

E. Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are placed in specific locations throughout AJR. These extinguishers should be used only in the event of an actual fire. Please notify the office if you used a fire extinguisher.

XXX. Courtesy Code

A. Maintaining a Safe Environment

While at AJR or participating in any AJR-sponsored event, all students, faculty, staff, and visitors are prohibited from contributing to any action or situation that recklessly or intentionally endangers mental or physical health or involves the forced consumption of liquor or drugs for the purpose of initiation into or affiliation with any organization. Anyone who contributes to these actions or situations may be removed from the AJR campus or event and may be subject to suspension, expulsion, or other appropriate disciplinary action (see Section IX:D).

The Academy for Jewish Religion is committed to the principle that discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated in the Academy community. This policy applies to all employees, administrators, faculty, staff, and students, including all applicants for admission or employment, and is applicable to visitors to the Academy and to those with whom the Academy conducts business.

AJR's Harassment Policy can be found as an appendix to this Catalog.

B. Representing AJR

Each AJR student is an ambassador for our school, whether to visiting prospective students, new students, or to the public at large. Please take your role as an emissary seriously and present yourself and the school in the best possible light. Everything we do or say reflects on our school and our community.

C. Dress at AJR

Members of the AJR community are challenged to consider the teaching of Torah in all areas of their lives. "And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God demand of you! Only this: to revere the Lord your God to walk in all of His paths…" (Deut. 10:12). This applies to many areas, and specifically to the way in which we dress. AJR's approach does not refer to a rigid and specific set of expectations, but to a broad and flexible range of possibilities based on a key Jewish value: *tzni'ut*, "modesty." All individuals are asked to consider how the way in which we dress reflects a modest or immodest way of presenting ourselves. Our school's mandate is to prepare students to serve as professional members of the clergy. Throughout their years of study, students are often challenged to transition into the roles of professional teachers, leaders, scholars, rabbis, and cantors. Therefore, AJR community members are asked to view the way they dress with that same eye toward professionalism, regardless of whether they are onsite or on Zoom.

D. Food Policy

As a *M'qom Torah* embracing all *Klal Yisrael*, AJR attempts to follow policies that maintain the integrity of our Torah while respecting diversity of approach. In that spirit, we have adopted the following guidelines regarding food items at AJR:

For AJR's policy on alcohol consumption, see above Section IV:S. Any wine brought to AJR events must be certified kosher. Other beverages, such as juices, must comply with the appropriate guidelines for an individual and the institution as set forth below.

The following should never be brought onto AJR premises whether for individual use or for shared use: food items which are from non-kosher animals, meat that is not slaughtered in accordance with traditional rules of kashrut, and foods that combine meat and dairy ingredients.

For official school events, including events or meeting led by other groups hosted at AJR, AJR will serve only foods that are certified kosher by an authoritative and recognized supervisory body. An unregistered "K" doesn't qualify for this standard. "Official school events" include any event organized by AJR, For full day programs, AJR's policy will be to wait three hours to serve dairy after serving meat. In those cases, a pareve option will also be served to accommodate those individuals that wait six hours between eating meat and milk.

As individuals, we may have differing commitments to kashrut and differing interpretations of its rules. Therefore, all food brought onto AJR premises by any individual for the individual's own consumption may be cooked in an individual's own kitchen or bought at a store that lacks kosher certification as long as that food conforms to what is stated above, i.e., it does not contain meat from non-kosher animals, meat that is not slaughtered in accordance with traditional rules of kashrut nor combines meat and dairy ingredients.

There is also some flexibility regarding food that is brought to AJR to be informally shared with others not as part of an official school event, e.g., to be left in the student lounge. AJR wants to allow community members to share their own food with other community members as long as that is done with an open and pluralistic spirit. As with all food brought to AJR, such food must conform to the rules stated above and not contain meat from non-kosher animals, meat that is not slaughtered according to traditional rules of kashrut nor combine meat and dairy ingredients. However, like food brought for individual use, food brought for informal sharing may be cooked in an individual's own kitchen or bought at a store that is not certified kosher. Such food must be accompanied by a form that identifies who has brought the food in to be shared, the ingredients in it, and the kind of kitchen in which it is prepared. The form allows us to be open about the source of the food and permits AJR community members to decide, in an informed way, whether or not they feel comfortable partaking of the shared food. In the spirit of pluralism, there is room at AJR for both stricter and more relaxed applications of the rules of kashrut.

E. Environmental Policy

"Whoever breaks vessels, or tears garments, or destroys a building, or clogs a well, or does away with food in a destructive manner, violates the principle of *bal tashhit*."

Babylonian Talmud, Kiddushin 32a

Guided by the ancient Jewish principles of *bal tashhit* – the commandment not to waste (Deut. 20:19-20) – and the injunction in Genesis *l'ovdah vel'shomrah* – to work for the earth and preserve it (Gen 2:15), AJR has instituted sustainability guidelines in order to insure the maximum possible attention to issues of environmental preservation.

AJR commits to buying recycled or partially recycled materials where possible and financially practical. This includes copy paper, disposable paper goods, plastic utensils, etc. AJR encourages faculty and students to act in a similar manner.

AJR asks everyone to reduce use of paper, plastic, and other substances that are valuable resources and/or damaging to the environment when discarded. This means considering whether paper photocopies are really needed during a class or an event, sending materials electronically, serving food that does not require very many utensils, avoiding excessively packaged food, etc.

We do not use Styrofoam at AJR events because of its toxic impact on the environment and have nearly eliminated the usage of plastic giveaways ("swag") when we gather together.

AJR asks everyone on campus to reduce use of fuel by turning lights and other appliances off when not in use.

When we come together in person, we serve little to no meat, in an effort to make more sustainable food choices.

The vast majority of the fuel used by the AJR community is used by commuters in private cars. We advise carpools and public transportation wherever possible. We also invite students who travel to the Gatherings, particularly by car or plane, to consider purchasing carbon offsets as a way of limiting the impact of our travel on the environment, and are available to advise on how to purchase such offsets.

Led by our Sustainability Committee, AJR is partnered with Hazon's Jewish Climate Leadership Coalition.

AJR is intentional in offering educational programming in the area of environmentalism to our students, alumni and faculty.

We hope, through these policies, to be good stewards of creation and to contribute to the preservation and healing of the earth. *"This is the way of the righteous and those who improve society… that nothing, not even a grain of mustard, should be lost to the world, that they should regret any loss or destruction that they see, and if possible they will prevent any destruction that they can." (Sefer HaHinukh*, #529)

F. Coming to AJR

If you are interested in coming to the AJR campus, please be in touch with the Senior Director of Administration in advance (sfassler@ajr.edu).

The Academy's physical site will be closed for the day due to weather conditions when the New York City or Yonkers public schools are closed, when the MTA closes, or at the discretion of the Academic Dean.

G. Marketing of Credit Cards

Pursuant to NYS Law Chapter 16, Title 7, Article 129-A, § 6437, AJR prohibits the advertising, marketing, or merchandising of credit cards on the AJR campus or at AJR-sponsored events.

XXXI. Spirituality at AJR

AJR prioritizes the integration of spirituality – the experience of connection to God as each individual understands God – into all aspects of rabbinical and cantorial education. Our classes contain exploration of Jewish spiritual resources and personal meaning, and offer tools for creating a vibrant and connected Judaism. A day at AJR always has set times for reflection and prayer as well as intellectual study.

We welcome reverence, curiosity, and openness about one's own spiritual life and the spiritual lives of others. We invite a pluralistic approach that respects many different ways of being spiritual. Some individuals feel God through Torah study, while others feel transported by song or silence. Some feel most connected to spirit when in community prayer, and others feel most connected on a mountaintop. At AJR, we invite the sharing of many different kinds of spiritual approaches.

A. Prayer

Afternoon prayer (*Minhah*) is a part of most study days at AJR. The entire community is invited to participate in these daily rituals. For more information, please see the section on *T'fillah* on Student Life at AJR.

B. Holidays

AJR marks the Jewish holidays with special lunchtime teaching programs and ritual experiences. There might be a *Tu b'Shevat* seder, a *Purim* feast with *Purim* spiels, a teaching on the laws of *hametz* before *Pesah,* a model seder, a visit from a survivor on *Yom haShoah*, and many other programs. These programs are meant to invite students and faculty members to enter the spirit of the holiday, and are also models for students to use in creating their own holiday programming.

C. Meditation

Meditation and visualization have been important tools for Jewish mystics across the centuries. AJR holds guided meditations periodically throughout the year in the mornings, using various Kabbalistic and other Jewish methods for meditation and reflections.

D. Spiritual Spelunking

Spiritual Spelunking is a lunchtime program held periodically. In this program, faculty members and invited guests speak about their own spiritual questions, concerns, and significant moments. The community then reflects together on these sharings. Recent topics have included everything from theology to *halakhic* practice, the story of the sage Shimon bar Yochai to Jewish-Catholic dialogue, and Jewish music to Judaism and science.

E. Classes

All classes at AJR attempt to integrate the spiritual. Some classes specially geared to the topic of spirituality include Jewish Contemplative Practice, Personal Theology, Liturgy, Contemporary Ritual, Jewish Mysticism, Jewish Dreamwork, and "*Tefillah* and Seminar," a laboratory in prayer leadership.

We invite suggestions for new ways we can make our community environment conducive to spiritual experience.

XXXII. Senior Standing for Ordination Students

A. Requirements for Senior Standing

Upon entering the fall trimester of their senior year, students must have fulfilled all but 28 credits (20 credits for those in the Cantors to Rabbis track) for those intending to take a full course load of 14 credits per term. For those students taking classes part-time, the remaining number of credits must be feasible for them to complete during the fall and spring trimesters while engaged in completing any other remaining AJR requirements and other life responsibilities.

In addition, each student must meet criteria of personal suitability for the cantorate and/or rabbinate. Our program of training culminates with institutional *semikhah* conferred upon the candidate by the Academy in the presence of a witnessing *Beit Din* or *Batei Din* in the case of *Kol-Bo* ordination. In order to be able to ordain

a candidate, the Academy must feel certain that the candidate's ways of interaction with others are safe and well-balanced. This decision will be informed by:

- the manner in which a student interacts within the AJR community;
- feedback from AJR faculty and advisors;
- feedback from colleagues and congregants at worksites; and/or
- direct discussion with the student.

The decision to ordain any candidate will be made by the Senior Administration. Someone who is determined to be unprepared in any of the areas delineated above will not be ordained.

For more details concerning senior standing, see the Senior Handbook.

XXXIII. Ordination

This section provides a very brief overview of ordination requirements. For more details, please consult the relevant sections of the Catalog above or the Senior Handbook.

A. Completion of Examinations and Comprehensives

All examinations and comprehensives must be completed by September 1st of the academic year in which ordination is expected (however, for rabbinical students, see above for the option of Alternative Comprehensive Exams). If a student fails a comprehensive examination, a determination will be made by the Dean as to whether the exam should be retaken or whether alternate coursework should be done in its stead. Retakes of comprehensive examinations must be completed by the first week of January of the expected year of ordination. Based on the results of the exam, the decision may be made that the student will need to put off ordination for a year or more. In extreme cases, if multiple exams are failed, or if exams are failed multiple times, it may be determined that the student is not eligible for ordination.

For rabbinic comprehensive examinations, see Section XVIII:D

For cantorial comprehensive examinations, see Section XIX:D

B. Master's Project

Rabbinical, cantorial, and M.A. Degree students fulfill their Master's Project requirement by completing the Master's Project as part of the M.A. in Jewish Studies. This project must be completed over the course of the fall of the student's senior year (see Section XXI:D for a precise timeline).

C. Senior Practicum

Senior cantorial students must present a Senior Practicum (see Section XIX:G).

D. Ritual Skills

Ritual Skill requirements must be completed by the end of the fall trimester of the senior year. Specific ritual skill requirements and descriptions are outlined in the Ritual Skills Handbook.

Current students have access to a group on Populi called "Ritual Skills," which contains valuable resources and recordings from previous lunchtime Ritual Skills programming that are of help for preparing to fulfill Ritual Skills requirements.

E. Financial Obligations

All financial obligations to the Academy must be settled by March 1st of the ordination year and acknowledgment of any debt for student loans must be filed with the Financial Office.

F. Ordination Ceremony

The format and structure of the ordination ceremony will be determined by the Senior Administration. Changes in the customs of the Academy for Jewish Religion ordination ceremony will be fully discussed with the Academy for Jewish Religion community.

1. Ordinees can choose between being called Rav or the newer feminine form Rabbah as their Hebrew title on the *semikhah* documents. All students will use Rabbi as their English title.

2. Each ordinee is allotted 2½ minutes after their personal ordination during the Ordination Ceremony, which may be used for teaching, musical presentation, or personal remarks. This 2½ minute limit applies to both cantorial and rabbinical ordinees; *Kol-Bo* ordinees have a slightly longer time limit. Candidates for cantorial ordination must submit the musical selection they will be performing at ordination by the date specified by the office to ensure that it can be included in the Ordination Journal.

3. Each senior may choose the four participants (or seven in the case of *Kol-Bo*) in their own ordination. There will be one Presenter and three members of the witnessing *Beit Din*, or two *Batei Din* in the case of *Kol-Bo* (the presenter should not be on the *Beit Din*). Three members of this group (or six in the case of *Kol-Bo*) must be a part of the Academy for Jewish Religion community – that is members of the faculty (who have taught at AJR within the past five years), alumni, or a current member of the Board of Trustees. When Ordination takes place in person all participants must be present in person. **All presenters and *Batei Din* members must be approved in advance by Dr. Ora Horn Prouser *prior* to reaching out to them to offer this honor.**

4. The members of the *Beit Din* must have received a rabbinical or cantorial ordination (or cantorial investiture) acceptable to the Academy for Jewish Religion. The *Beit Din* for a rabbinical student must be comprised of rabbis. We encourage cantorial students to choose a *Beit Din* comprised of three cantors. If a student desires, one member of the *Beit Din* for a cantorial student may be a rabbi. For *Kol-Bo* students, one *Beit Din* should be comprised entirely of rabbis and the other entirely of cantors (for a total of three rabbis and three cantors). A *Beit Din* member who is both a rabbi and a cantor may count as one or the other for the purposes of the ordaining *Beit Din*.

5. The Presenter will introduce the candidate for ordination with one sentence during the Ordination ceremony. This is the ordinee's formal introduction as a Jewish professional with their new title and, therefore, this role should be given to someone with standing in the Jewish professional community or in relationship with the Jewish professional community. Please note that the presenter writes a longer introduction for the ordinee that is included in the Ordination Journal but during the Ordination ceremony itself the presenter *only* recites a one sentence formula along the lines of the following, "It is my great pleasure to present Rabbi/Cantor _____."

Ordination attire consists of a black robe (provided by AJR) and a *tallit.* In keeping with the solemnity of the occasion and to create uniformity, we encourage ordinees to wear the *atarah* (gifted to our ordinees by ARC), as well as the *kippah* and *kanfot* (gifted to our ordinees by the Student Association). For those who have a specific tradition of not a *kippah*, we encourage them to consider an alternative head

covering and they should speak with the Senior Director of Admissions about acquiring the same material used for the AJR *kippot*. Those who have a strong tradition of not wearing a *tallit* should speak with the AJR admission. In addition, in years when AJR is awarding Master's Degrees, you are encouraged to wear an academic hood from the school you earned your highest degree from. We will provide hoods for those earning a Master's Degree from AJR. More information on this will be discussed during the spring trimester.

Addendum to Catalog

XXXIV. VA Pending Payment Compliance

Facility Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Facility Code: Click or tap here to enter text.

Person Completing Addendum: Click or tap here to enter text.

In accordance with Title 38 US Code 3679 subsection (e), this school adopts the following additional provisions for any students using U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Post 9/11 G.I. Bill® (Ch. 33) or Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Ch. 31) benefits, while payment to the institution is pending from the VA. This school will not:

- Prevent nor delay the student's enrollment;
- Assess a late penalty fee to the student;
- Require the student to secure alternative or additional funding;
- Deny the student access to any resources available to other students who have satisfied their tuition and fee bills to the institution, including but not limited to access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities.

However, to qualify for this provision, such students may be required to:

- Produce the Certificate of Eligibility by the first day of class;
- Provide written request to be certified;
- Provide additional information needed to properly certify the enrollment as described in other institutional policies.

I, Click or tap here to enter text., do hereby certify this addendum to be true and correct in content and policy. Our institution will adopt this addendum, effective 1 August 2019, and will incorporate into the next revision of our catalog.

_____ _____

Signature Date

To ensure compliance, please retain this completed form for your records and submit a copy to kathleen.vonk@veterans.ny.gov.

XXXV. Campus crime reporting and statistics

The Advisory Committee on Campus Safety will provide upon request all campus crime statistics as reported to the United States Department of Education.

AJR will provide, upon request, all campus crime statistics as reported to the United States Department of Education. This information can be found online at the US Department of Education Office of Post Secondary Education website or by contacting the Assistant Academic Dean, Matthew Goldstone, at (914) 709-0900.

Whenever an individual requests such campus crime statistics, AJR shall provide a hard copy mailed to the individual within ten days of the request and that information will include all of the statistics that AJR is required to ascertain under Title 20 of the U.S. Code Section 1092(f).

XXXVI. Course Catalog

The following list includes regular and required courses as well as electives that have been offered recently. The courses are divided by Course Area. For information regarding if and when a course is likely to be offered again, please contact the Academic Dean, Dr. Ora Horn Prouser (ohornprouser@ajr.edu).

A. Bible

Prerequisites for all Bible courses:

- Hebrew level must be at least at the level of Hebrew IA.
- Bible 101 Introduction to Bible (excluding *Parashat Hashavuah*)

BIB 101 Introduction to Bible
This course will introduce the student to modern critical studies of the Bible. Selected texts of the Bible will be studied in depth while broader thematic issues will be surveyed. Various methodologies used by biblical scholars will be introduced to the students. The many meanings of the text and the centrality of the Bible in the Jewish world will be emphasized through careful study. This course is a prerequisite for all Bible study at AJR. Students in this course must be at the level of Hebrew I or above. (2 credits) - *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

BIB 140 / 250 / 420 Introduction to Parshanut
An introduction to the medieval Jewish commentators found in the printed tradition of rabbinic Bibles (Mikra'ot Gedolot). Selections, mostly from the Torah, will be examined to compare and contrast opinions of Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, Ramban and other commentators. Students will also become familiar with other features and interpretive tools found on the pages of rabbinic Bibles. (2 credits) - *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

BIB 309 The Book of Judges
This course explores the book of Judges, a book about Israel's formative years as a nation learning to self-govern. The course offers an in-depth analysis of the stories, themes, and historical background of the texts, as it explores the characteristics and roles of leaders and ideological approaches to the notion of leadership in the book. Together we will examine the book of Judges in its historical, canonical, and theological contexts, using a variety of analytical approaches, including literary, exegetical, historical, historiographical, intertextual, masoretic, gender and animal studies.
This course satisfies the Leadership in the Bible: Nevi'im Rishonim requirement.
Prerequisite: In order to count this class as a biblical text class, students must have taken Introduction to Bible. Otherwise, students may count this class as an elective. (2 credits) – *Last offered: Fall 2024*

BIB 321: Erotica, Melancholia and Parodia: A Close Look at Shir Hashirim and Esther

If asked what literary modes of expression might be least suited for inclusion into the Hebrew Bible (considered by many to be the holiest writing of all time), one might offer parody, erotica and mourning as three of those quite questionable thematic genres. And yet, Esther, Song of Songs and Lamentations in the Books of Writings seem to use these modes to a significant extent. In this course, we will study these three literary masterpieces, examining their content as well as the language and linguistic nuances present in each book. We will explore their historical perspectives along with the possible rationale for the insertion of these three scrolls into the Tanach. Students will come to understand the basic structure of each of these books, the noteworthy language

and literary structure, as well as the profound message which each of the authors endeavored to impart to their readers/listeners. Prerequisite: In order to count this class as a biblical text class, students must have taken Introduction to Bible. Otherwise, they may count this class as an elective. Students in this course must be at the level of Hebrew IA or above. *Last offered: Summer 2021*

BIB 323: Sex and the City In The Bible: Ruth, Esther, and Lady Jerusalem

This course offers a close critical reading of Ruth, Esther, and Lamentations, three biblical texts centered on female figures whose stories raise enduring questions about identity, belonging, and moral agency. Through these narratives, students will develop interpretive skills and be able to articulate the structure, purpose, and theological outlook of each text, as well as identify ways in which these works shed light on the human condition today. Topics of discussion include rights discourse vs. identity discourse, the eclipse of God and emergence of human agency, empathy and justice, enticement and manipulation, hatred and metonymic thinking, identity and violence, love and forgiveness, politics and strangers, primordial and multicultural identity, the sense of the transcendent, "kosher adultery," and Lekha Dodi. *Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 1-5 hours per week

BIB 337 Eliyahu Hanavi
We will study the life and work of the Prophet Elijah from the perspective of understanding the making of a spiritual leader. We will use both biblical and rabbinic texts, artistic images, and more in seeing how we can use the life of this prophet in understanding and working on clergy formation and spiritual leadership. *Last offered: Spring 2026*

BIB 338 Reading in Song of Songs and Qohelet
This course examines fundamental dimensions of the human experience—love, aging, mortality, and selfhood—through a close critical reading of the Song of Songs and Qoheleth. Students will engage with the structure, purpose, and theological outlook of each book while grappling with their profound reflections on the complexity of being human and the search for lasting fulfillment. Equally important, we will consider how love and death open the possibility of life beyond life—an encounter with the reality of the holy. The course will also explore how to bring these texts into contemporary discourse, guided by AJR values of critical rigor, inclusivity, and commitment to pluralistic Jewish and broader communities. Prerequisite: Introduction to Bible. *Last offered: Summer 2025*

BIB 341 Science in Dialogue with Biblical Imagery
This class will examine the natural imagery that permeates the Hebrew Bible — trees, mountains, wind, and stars — together with related areas of science — biology, geology, meteorology, and astrophysics — to discover how we might read the Bible in new ways in juxtaposition with science. *Last offered: Spring 2022*

BIB 345 Genesis
This course is a close critical reading of Genesis, revolving around the themes of freewill and the human condition. By the conclusion of this course, the student will learn: (1) the structure, purposes, and theological outlook of Genesis; (2) the insight into the complexity of being human as well as the enduring dilemmas of soulcraft as reflected in Genesis; and (3) how to teach the book of Genesis to the contemporaries with AJR values (i.e., critical rigor, inclusivity, commitment to the pluralistic, contemporary Jewish and broader communities). Prerequisite: Introduction to Bible. (2 credits). *Last offered: Summer 2025*

BIB 346 The Book of Exodus: Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Blessedness
This course will explore the theme of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Blessedness through a critical reading of the book of Exodus. By the conclusion of this course, students will be able to articulate: (1) the structure, purposes, and theological outlook of Exodus; (2) the theology of liberty, happiness, and self-transcendence as reflected in Exodus; and (3) three examples where the book of Exodus is a source for understanding the human condition in our own day. The subjects we will discuss include: "election and covenant," "liberty and ownership," "politics and holiness," "slavery and political violence," "gender and resistance," "care for others and the risk of humiliation," "individuality and collectivity," "God's transcendence and exclusivity," "religious leader as a vessel or partner of God," "law and the image of God," "ritual and creation," "identity and narrative," "self-deification as idolatry," "holiness of space and holiness of time," and "My Country, 'Tis of Thee." (2 credits). *Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 2-6 hours per week

BIB347: Leviticus Reconsidered

Many find the book of Leviticus too difficult to understand. Its cultic concerns seem obsolete and boring, and its rules of sacrifices and ritual purity appear to have no relevance to the social, existential, and normative issues of our time. And yet, we live in the "Golden Age of *Parashat Hashavua* (Weekly Torah portion)," and Jewish clergies are expected to know how to draw insight from this seemingly outmoded and arcane book. This course is a close critical reading of Leviticus, revolving around the contemporary relevance of this text. By the conclusion of this course, the student will learn: (1) the structure, purposes, and theological outlook of Leviticus; (2) the theology of holiness and the idea of biblical ecology as reflected in Leviticus; and (3) how to teach the book of Leviticus to the contemporaries with AJR values (i.e., critical rigor, inclusivity, commitment to the pluralistic, contemporary Jewish and broader communities). Prerequisite: Introduction to Bible. This course will count as a Bible elective. *Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 2-14 hours per week

BIB 348 Becoming Israel in the Wilderness: Studies in the Book of Numbers

This course is a close critical reading of Numbers, revolving around the themes of identity, holiness, and the transformation of peoplehood. By the conclusion of this course, the student will learn: (1) the structure, purposes, and theological outlook of Numbers; (2) the significance of identity, holiness, and peoplehood as reflected in Numbers; and (3) how to teach the book of Numbers to contemporaries with AJR values (i.e., critical rigor, inclusivity, commitment to the pluralistic, contemporary Jewish and broader communities). This course will count as a Bible elective or as Parashat Hashavua. Prerequisite: Introduction to Bible. (2 credits). *Last offered: Summer 2024*

BIB 350 The Book of Deuteronomy: Life in the Promised Land as a Mixed Blessing
This course is a close critical reading of the book of Deuteronomy, revolving around the themes of individuality, collectivity, and humanity. By the conclusion of this course, each student will be able to articulate: (1) the structure, purposes, and theological outlook of Deuteronomy; and (2) three examples where the book of Deuteronomy is a source for understanding the human condition in our own day. The subjects we will discuss include: "monotheism and violence," "duties of the heart," "election and history," "fear and awe," "free will and responsibility," "gender and sexuality," "holiness and language," "identity and the Other," "law and history," "legislation and interpretation," "memory and empathy," "nationalism and universalism," "privilege and entitlement," "the grip of power," "The Oral Torah and the Written Torah," "leadership and failures," and

"divine transcendence and divine personhood." Prerequisite: Introduction to Bible. (2 credits). *Last offered: Fall 2024*

BIB 404 Jeremiah

The Book of Jeremiah stands at a turning point in the history of Judah, between monarchy and exile. Giving voice to a prophet in tense relationship with royal power, it foresees the fall of Jerusalem and the loss of the temple while insisting on divine sovereignty. The book blends poetry, prose, lament, and vivid symbolic actions, and includes both judgment and words of renewal. This course familiarizes students with Jeremiah and its broader place in the Tanakh. We will focus on close readings of the text (peshat) in Hebrew and in translation, engaging its language, structure, and historical setting without reliance on later commentary. Special attention will be given to the book's Benjaminite vantage point—Anathoth, Mizpah, and the region north of Jerusalem—and how this perspective shapes its frank view of Jerusalem's fate and its reflections on covenant, responsibility, and repair. We will also consider how Jewish communities—both those exiled and those who remained—drew on Jeremiah to think through crisis and the possibility of renewal. *Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-5 hours per week

BIB 421 Religion, Politics, and Leadership Failure in the Bible: Studies in the Book of Samuel
This course will be a critical reading of the book of Samuel, revolving around two axes: (1) religion and politics and (2) leadership and the human condition (or human fallibility). By the conclusion of this course, the student will be able to articulate: (1) the structure, purposes, and theological outlook of the book of Samuel; (2) biblical insight into the relationships among politics, religion, and leadership; and (3) three examples where the book of Samuel is a source for understanding the human condition in our own day. We will also explore existential issues embodied in the text that are relevant to contemporary concerns–such as "problems of power," "leadership and accountability," "family and loyalty," "gender and sexuality," "divine and human law," "agency and responsibility," "cultivation of mindfulness," "transformation of self," and "the Other." This course fulfills the Leadership in the Bible Rabbinical school requirement. (2 credits) *Last offered: Summer 2025*

BIB 445 The Adventures of Monotheism: The Varieties of Religious Experience in Jewish Tradition

No Jews would deny the centrality of monotheism—the belief in one God YHWH—in their religion. And yet, when it comes to its content, their opinions are so diverse that you may begin to wonder if people next to you in the synagogue are actually praying to the same God. This course explores the biblical idea of monotheism and how it has served as a ground for varieties of religious experience in Jewish tradition. We will divide the history of Judaism and its interpretative tradition into four phases—biblical, rabbinic, medieval, and modern—and set forth four corresponding models for addressing the divine reality. The diversity of these models will help students develop an informed perspective on the fascinating story of this ever-evolving notion—within Judaism and beyond—and tools so vital for serving as clergy in pluralistic settings. Prerequisite: In order to count this class as a biblical text class, students must have taken Introduction to Bible. Otherwise, they may count this class as an elective. Students in this course must be at the level of Hebrew IA or above. *Last offered: Summer 2021*

BIB 461: *B'tzelem Elohim*: Biblical Text through the Lens of Disability Studies
Hafokh bah v'hafokh bah d'khulei bah. Turn it over and over for everything is in it (Pirke Avot). Each time we view the Bible through a new lens, we add to our understanding of the text, we learn more about ourselves, and we widen the impact of the Bible on the Jewish community. Using close readings, we will approach the biblical text through Disability Studies. We will see how viewing certain biblical personalities through this lens

provides access to new dimensions of their characters and the texts in which we encounter them. We will then consider the character of God in the Bible and how God too can be more deeply appreciated through the perspective of Disability Studies. Our exploration of this topic will be placed in the broader context of issues of disability and inclusion. This analysis challenges us to broaden our understanding of the concept of b'tzelem Elohim and will help us, in the critical work of more fully appreciating the image of God in those with physical, emotional, and intellectual challenges. This course will count as a Bible elective or as a General Elective. (2 credits) *Last offered: Fall 2024*

BIB 511 Studies in the Book of Job: When Bad Things Happen to a Good Person
How should we approach when bad things happen to a good person? How shouldn't we? And why? Where do we find resources to cope with evil? This course explores these and other related issues of human suffering through a critical reading of the book of Job. By the conclusion of this course, students will be able to articulate: (1) the structure, purposes, and theological outlook of Job; (2) biblical theologies of evil and tragedy; and (3) examples from the book of Job as a source for understanding the human condition in our own day. Readings will include works by such scholars as Mitch Albom, Viktor Frankl, Nahum Glatzer, Harold Kushner, Carol Newsom, and Rudolf Otto. Prerequisite: Introduction to Bible. (2 credits) *Last offered: Summer 2026*

BIB 520 The Psalms That Clergy Use
Psalms are an important tool for the clergy. In addition to the role they play in the liturgy, psalms also set the tone and the theological context of many life cycle events. No less important, the deep emotional expression of the psalms have moved the minds and the souls of Jews for millennia. They have been a source of comfort and strength and great spiritual aspiration. In this class, students will explore a wide variety of the psalms which find their way into the regular work of the clergy. We will learn with a focus on how to best understand and communicate the messages of the psalms to others. We will also have a deep concern for how the psalms enable our own spiritual and theological growth. This course can count as a Bible elective. *Last offered: Fall 2024*

B. Cantorial

CAN 106 Choir / Jewish Choral Music

Each student will Learn & Master the Skills of Musical Techniques used to Warm Up all voices at Choir Rehearsals. Students will Master 2 Pt, 3 Pt & 4 Pt Choral Selections ranging from: Pop Israeli songs to Hassidic nigunim, Yiddish folk songs and liturgical selections. Students will Learn & Master Proper Breathing for Vocal Coloration and Musical Integrity of choral singing. Each student will Learn & Master Materials they can use in concert or congregational 2 Pt materials for their own choirs. Each student will Master & Learn the Part They are Assigned to sing in each choral selection. *Last offered: Spring 2024*

CAN 115 Introduction to Modes
A study of the Jewish prayer modes and their application to the liturgy. Prerequisite for all *Nusah* classes at AJR (1 credit) *Offered periodically. Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 2-6 hours per week

CAN 116 Advanced Modes
Taking off from where Introduction to Modes leaves off, students will explore not only how the modes are integrated into liturgy but will begin to use them as a basis for their own improvisational work. Students will

have ample time to practice and perform their ideas in a small and warm environment. Emphasis will focus on the recognition of the correct mode for each prayer service and then, on its use as a vehicle for personal expression in the service of bringing more, or new, meaning to the prayer experience. *Offered periodically. Last offered: Fall 2023*

CAN 131 Musical Skills II
Continuation of the study of music theory, ear training, sight singing, harmony, and conducting. (No credit) *Offered periodically. Last offered: Fall 2021*

CAN 201 Jewish Music in the Diaspora
The purpose of this course is to explore Jewish music as an expression of diaspora identity. To understand Jewish musical expressions, this course examines Jewish culture and identity as inherently diasporic. This course analyzes different types of Jewish musical expressions, including liturgical, para-liturgical, and non-liturgical spheres of musical production. This course fulfills the Music History requirement. (2 credits) *Offered periodically. Last offered: Spring 2025*

CAN 230 Musical Skills III
Continuation of the study of music theory, ear training, sight singing, harmony, and conducting leading to proficiency. (2 credits) *Offered periodically. Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-3 hours per week

CAN 266 Songs I Wish I Knew

An immersive musical workshop for rabbis and cantors who missed the formative camp and youth movement song culture. Through text study and context, participants will learn the core repertoire that continues to shape Jewish communal life — and how to lead it with authenticity and confidence. *Last offered: Summer 2026*

CAN 280 Drumming and Chanting
There are many pathways to opening the heart to prayer. This course will explore the art of chant and drumming as spiritual practice, and in your work as *shaliah tzibbur*. Students will learn techniques to facilitate drumming and chanting in community. A portion of each class will be used to strengthen those skills as together we engage in the practice. All students must bring a drum to use during class though. No prior drumming experience is required. (1 credit) *Last offered: Spring 2022*

CAN 300 Halakhah for the Cantorate

Designed for those with no background in halakhah (Jewish law), this course offers a brief overview of the history of halakhah, the major sources of halakhah, and how to search for answers within the corpus of halakhah. We will dedicate time to foundational discussions about the nature and relevance of halakhah for all Jewish communities and in the majority of sessions; we will dive into halakhot related to prayer on both in-depth (iyyun) and broad (bekiut) levels. Prerequisite: Hebrew 350 (2A). This course fulfills the cantorial Introduction to Halakhah requirement. *Last offered: Summer 2023*

CAN 308 / 318 Cantillation I / Intro Cantillations

This course is part one of the three-course cantillation program. It is an in-depth study of Eastern European cantillation for Torah and Haftarah. In addition to learning the history, function, and art of cantillation, participants will work to demonstrate a proficiency in recognizing and chanting the various cantillation phrases

for these three tropes. (The specific schedule will be clear on the course syllabus) This course is open to both rabbinical and cantorial students. (2 credits) *Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 1-3 hours per week

CAN 319 / 322 Cantillation II

This course is part two of the three-course cantillation program. It is an in-depth study of Eastern European cantillation for Yamim Noraim and Eikah. In addition to learning the history, function, and art of cantillation, participants will work to demonstrate a proficiency in recognizing and chanting the various cantillation phrases for these three tropes. (The specific schedule will be clear on the course syllabus) This course is open to both rabbinical and cantorial students. (2 credits) *Last offered: Fall 2024*

CAN 320 / 311 Cantillation III

This course is part three of the three-course cantillation program. It is an in-depth study of Eastern European cantillation for Shalosh Regalim and Esther. In addition to learning the history, function, and art of cantillation, participants will work to demonstrate a proficiency in recognizing and chanting the various cantillation phrases for these three tropes. (The specific schedule will be clear on the course syllabus) This course is open to both rabbinical and cantorial students. (2 credits) *Last offered: Summer 2025*

CAN 385 Introduction to Peace Studies from a Jewish Perspectives

This course, the first in a series of three, will introduce Peace Studies through the lens of Jewish sacred texts, Tanakh, Talmud, and Halakha, as well as in examining current events that promise conflict while searching for relief, if not resolution. Each class will have a primary text and numerous additional texts which the class will prepare. The first half of every class will be spent in presentation of the material while the second half will spent in a guided discussion. *Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 1-4 hours per week

CAN 386 Peace Studies 2: Character, Conflict and Community Leadership

"It's alright for a shul to be a business – so long as you know what business you're really in." This cute aphorism begs a serious question: what's the real business of Jewish spiritual professionals? How can we wisely leverage character traits (flaws), moral leadership (failures), and peacemaking (conflicts) to nourish vibrant Jewish institutions? Blending traditional texts, socio-political literature and real-life case studies, this course will explore spiritual models of authority and legitimacy, middot (character traits) in spiritual leadership, Jewish pastoral and psycho-spiritual dynamics of conflict, and change agency in spiritual systems. Students will expand their community governance toolkits while accelerating their personal formation as spiritual leaders. This course counts as one of the Peace Studies requirements for cantorial students, and can also fulfill a spirituality elective. *Last offered: Fall 2023*

CAN 387 Shir LaShalom: Music, Process, and Peace Within and Without

This course brings another dimension to the Peace Studies curriculum at AJR. This course focuses on the active use of the speaking, chanting, and singing voice each member of the clergy has to offer. The place of music in conflict resolution, for which a rich body of material exists, will be examined along with experiences and techniques for enriching the task of making peace in the many varied situations all clergy members find

themselves working in. This course is part of the Peace Studies requirement for cantorial students and an elective for rabbinical students. *Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-2 hours per week

CAN 390 Maqam, Liturgy, and Jewish Musical Identities

This course explores maqam for the purposes of better understanding maqam-based music making in the Near East. Particular foci for the course include theoretical foundations of maqam, practical application of maqam, and the use of maqam in synagogue practice from the region. This course fulfills the Sephardi/Mizrachi Maqamat requirement. *Last offered: Fall 2025*

CAN 395 Piyyut
The piyyut has long been a post-biblical vehicle for expressing a high-register Hebraic response to Jewish life in Diaspora. Often ensconced in localized trends, be they linguistic and/or musical, piyyutim involve the interaction between text, sound, thought, and historical memory. In contemporary Jewish life, piyyutim have also moved beyond the liturgical and paraliturgical function, to navigate modern Hebraic culture in Israel as part of a globalized context of popular music. This course examines different themes, settings, and impacts of piyyutim practice in Jewish history and culture. *Last offered: Spring 2024*

The full cycle of Advanced Nusah courses runs every 3 years.

CAN 425 and 426 Advanced *Nusah: Shabbat* I and II
A study of the *nusah* and cantorial pieces for use on the *Shalosh Regalim* focusing on traditional melodies, prayer modes, and *Misinai* tunes. *Targil* section required. (4 credits) *Last offered: Fall 2025 and Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-4 hours per week

CAN 430 Advanced *Nusah: Shalosh Regalim*
A study of the *nusah* and cantorial pieces for use on the *Shalosh Regalim* focusing on traditional melodies, prayer modes, and Misinai tunes. *Targil* section required. (4 credits) *Last offered: Fall 2024*

CAN 437 Advanced *Nusah: L'hol* and Minor Holidays
A study of the nusah of the weekday service. A complete exploration of motifs and modes for weekday *Shaharit*, *Minhah* and *Ma'ariv* services. This class will include special prayer additions for Hanukah, *Purim*, fast days, *Tisha B'av* and *Rosh Hodesh*. All students will be expected to *daven* and analyze all the different services. *Targil* section required. (4 credits) *Last offered: Spring 2025*

CAN 445, 446, 447, and 448 Advanced *Nusah – Yamim Noraim* I, II, and III
An in depth extensive study of the vast *Misinai* tunes that make up the *Rosh Hashannah* and *Yom Kippur*liturgy. Each student must develop an understanding of the various motifs and *nushaot* and how to use them in the course of *davenning*. *Targil* section required. (4 credits) *Last offered: Spring 2024*

CAN 526 Sephardic Liturgical Traditions

During this summer course we will discuss liturgical and secular musical and poetic examples providing an opportunity for individuals to lead elements of synagogue services and to share their personal experiences during the learning process. For the purpose of this course we will broadly define Sefaradim as the Jews of the

Western and Eastern Mediterranean World, but we will also consider research on Middle Eastern Jews and the Jewish communities of the Maghreb. This course will count as an elective. *Last offered: Summer 2022*

CAN 527 Israeli Music
Israeli popular music can be seen as interpretive prayer, poetry that arises directly and/or creatively as a unique and extraordinary form of liturgy. In this course, we will explore, study, and get inspired by contemporary and timely expressions of prayer that can inspire us personally and be useful in various praying and teaching settings. We will cover the Israeli state's founding poets, musical legends, and newcomers alike, who help us connect not only to the individual artists but also to liturgy in a more expansive way, and to Israel's history (both in wartime and peacetime), her resilience, her beauty, and her personal and collective stories. This course can count toward the Tefilah and Seminar requirement or as an elective. Open to both cantorial and rabbinical students. (1 credit) *Last offered: Fall 2024*

CAN 561 Music for Life Cycle Events and Other Jewish Happenings
The course will address all occasions in the congregational calendar during which the cantor's officiating and music plays an important part, including life cycle events, healing services, and more. (1 credit) *Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-2 hours per week

C. Halakhah

Prerequisites for all Halakhot courses:

- Hebrew IA and IB

HAL 373 Critical Issues in Halakhah and Science
A study of pressing modern issues based in *halakhic* literature, both traditional and modern. (2 credits) *Last offered: Spring 2025 – This course is no longer a required part of the Rabbinical Program*

HAL 401 Introduction to Codes
This course will introduce students to the literature of the Halakhic Codes. The primary text for this course will be Maimonides's *Mishneh* Torah. Along with selections from the *Mishneh* Torah, students will study material from other *Halakhic* Codes. They will also learn about the biographies of important figures in the history of *halakhic* literature. (2 credits) Prerequisite: Introduction to Mishnah and Hebrew must be at least at the level of Hebrew IIA or the equivalent. *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

HAL 402 Introduction to Codes II
Continuation of HAL 401. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Fall 2024 – This course is no longer a required part of the Rabbinical Program*

HAL 460 Intermediate Codes
A close study of the classic primary sources in the Codes addressing different themes each trimester. The primary text for this course will be Joseph Karo's *Shulhan Arukh*. Students will also address questions about the codification and methods of *Halakhic* Codes. (2 credits) Prerequisite: Introduction to Codes and Hebrew must be at least at the level of Hebrew IIA or the equivalent. *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 1-6 hours per week

HAL 480 Responsa
In this course we will conduct a close reading of rabbinic responsa from a variety of historic periods, tracing the responsa literature from its earliest origins to its 21st century expression. Selected responsa will cover a range of topics and areas of Jewish life. Contemporary responsa studied will reflect a wide spectrum of perspectives and denominational origins. Prerequisite: Intro Talmud, Intro Codes, and Hebrew must be at least at the level of Hebrew IIA or the equivalent (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

HAL 510 Advanced Codes
This course will focus on Joseph Karo's Shulhan Arukh, the major medieval code of Jewish law that continues to inform contemporary practice. We will study many of the most important laws related to the observance of laws of mourning and dietary practices with secondary readings that offer more diverse perspectives on a variety of related issues. Prerequisite: two trimesters of Introduction to Codes. Prerequisite: Intro to Codes and Hebrew must be at least at the level of Hebrew IIA or the equivalent. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-3 hours per week

D. Hebrew

HEB 250 Hebrew IA
In this course, students will study Modern Hebrew with emphasis on both grammar and vocabulary. Conversational skills will be an integral element of the learning experience. Prerequisite: Hebrew exam (4 credits) *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

HEB 251 Hebrew IB
Continuation of HEB 250. (4 credits) *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Fall 2026*

HEB 320 Biblical Hebrew
Building on a basis in Modern Hebrew, this course introduces the grammar and usage of the classical language of the Hebrew Bible. We will focus on how Biblical Hebrew differs from Modern Hebrew, and the syntactical and grammatical details necessary to understand the Hebrew Bible. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 1-8 hours per week

HEB 350 Hebrew IIA
This course will continue the study of Modern Hebrew, emphasizing grammar, vocabulary, reading, and conversation. Prerequisite: Hebrew I (4 credits) *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-6 hours per week

HEB 351 Hebrew IIB

Continuation of HEB 351. (4 credits) *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

HEB 400 Hebrew IIIA
The purpose of this course is to transition students from intermediate into advance level of Hebrew. The course

will focus on vocabulary expansion and reading comprehension and will provide training in speaking and listening. Students will develop their productive language skills via class discussions and presentations and via reading and writing assignments. (4 credits) *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

HEB 401 Hebrew IIIB
This course is a continuation of Hebrew IIIA. The focus of this course will be on reading and listening comprehension of informative and narrative texts in Modern Hebrew. Written, oral, and aural assignments will enhance communication and comprehension skills while improving absorption and integration of vocabulary and grammar. Prerequisite: Hebrew IIIA or its equivalent. (4 credits) *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2025*

E. History

HIS 350 American Jewish History and Culture
What has it meant to be Jewish in America in the modern era? It's a provocative question, and one that has many different answers depending on the time period and whom you ask. (Two Jews, three opinions, right?) This course will explore some of these answers and the debates surrounding them by examining the history and culture of the Jewish community over the past 150 years, starting with the first immigration in the 1800s, and working our way to the present day. Among the topics covered will be the different waves of Jewish immigration, the evolving role of women within American Judaism, relations with other immigrant and minority communities, and Zionism. Looking at these and other subjects will help us to understand how the community has arrived at the place it is today. This course fulfills the American Jewish History requirement. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-8 hours per week

HIS 355 Israel Post October 7
In the aftermath of October 7th, this course aims to examine the diverse reactions and transformations within Israeli society and their implications for American Jewish life, focusing on leadership, ethical, cultural, and societal changes. The exploration will be conducted through an in-depth acquaintance with the questions and challenges arising from the conflict, engaging in dialogue with leaders featured in the course. Furthermore, participants will acquire leadership tools essential for Jewish-American leaders in the aftermath of the war. By addressing a broad spectrum of topics—from the ethical dilemmas of warfare and power dynamics, to sharing complex narratives and combating Antisemitism—participants will gain a deep understanding of the contemporary Israeli and Jewish American contexts. Additionally, in each session, participants will be introduced to a project created in response to the war, examining the understanding of the need for the project, getting acquainted with the initiators, and how it operated. The course does not require prior knowledge of Israeli culture or the Hebrew language. However, students will engage with Israeli videos, podcasts, and literature (with English translations provided), and learn about various initiatives throughout the course. *Last offered: Summer 2024*

HIS 357 History of Zionism and Israel

This course explores the birth, evolution, and impact of Zionism as one of the most transformative forces in modern Jewish life. Tracing the movement from its 19th-century roots through the founding of the State of Israel in 1948 and its ongoing development as a Jewish state, students will examine the diverse ideological,

religious, and cultural streams that shaped Zionism and continue to influence global Jewry today. Drawing on classic and contemporary works—including Gil Troy's The Zionist Ideas, and Anita Shapira's Israel: A History, Daniel Gordis's Israel: A Concise History of a Nation Reborn, and Claire Sufrin's and Yehuda Potok's The New Jewish Canon—the course provides a foundation for understanding how the dream of Jewish nationhood redefined Jewish identity, reshaped the Diaspora, and continues to animate Jewish thought and debate. Far from a study of current events, The History of Zionism invites students to build historical and theological literacy, engaging deeply with the questions, tensions, and aspirations that gave rise to the modern Jewish State and transformed the Jewish people's sense of home, destiny, and belonging. *Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 3-6 hours per week

HIS 400 Great Ideas and Debates of Jewish History I
This course will examine the new ideas and the great debates that affected Jewish belief, culture, and society throughout the ages, from the Ancient period up through Modern Times. This is a two trimester class. The first trimester will focus on the earliest periods of the Jews as a people and conclude with Late Antiquity, exploring internal arguments within Judean society, with and among Diaspora Jews, and the interactions with pagan and early Christian society. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-5 hours per week

HIS 401 Great Ideas and Debates of Jewish History II
The second part of this two-trimester course will examine the new ideas and the great debates that affected Jewish belief, culture and society from the Early Middle Ages up through Early Modern Times. This trimester will focus on the new ideas, perspectives, innovations, and debates of the Babylonian Jewish community under Islamic rule, followed by the growth of the Spanish Jewish community and the exciting developments created in that context. The development of the Ashkenazi Jewish community, as well as its unique understanding of Torah, will be explored, along with the influences and cultural exchange between Judaism and the Medieval Christian World, leading into the period of European Enlightenment and the Early Modern World. This course may be taken without having taken the first trimester course. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

F. Integrated Study

INT 331 Sacred Arts/Circus Arts
How do we read text differently with our bodies? In this class we will pursue this idea as readers, teachers, artists, and fun loving individuals. We will approach the topic through the lens of circus studies, education, and inclusion. We will engage in the academic study of the new field of Circus Studies, a multifarious field with many discrete methodologies that all join in the pursuit of elevating the study of circus to scholarly levels. We will understand the value of the arts in education, and the importance of opening up our sacred literature to those who often feel disenfranchised by the traditional form of Jewish text study. We will study text through the vehicle of circus arts, such as human pyramids, partner acrobatics, juggling, rolla bolla, tightwire, and more. As we progress through the trimester, we will grow as educators and as artists, while also enhancing our ability to bring even more people into the study of text. This class will be co-taught by instructors in text study and in circus arts, with several visiting instructors joining us throughout the trimester. Open to all ages, abilities, and fitness levels. This class will fulfill the Sacred Arts requirement, or can be counted as a Bible elective or a spirituality elective. (2 credits) *Last offered: Summer 2022*

INT 368 V'ahavta – Divine and Human Love in Jewish Tradition
What does Jewish tradition say about love in its many manifestations? In this course, we will delve into many sources that describe, celebrate, and teach about love between people and God as well as between people. We will examine the implications for the modern notion of romantic love, the mandate to work for justice, and the meaning of the Chosen People, among other ideas. We will deepen our appreciation for how traditional Jewish sources can surprise and inform as we study teachings about love from the Bible – along with its commentaries – and from Talmud, Midrash, halakhah and Jewish mysticism. *Last offered: Summer 2024*

INT 395 After Faith Breaks
Faith is often imagined as unshakable, but what is faith? And what happens when it is challenged, fractured, or even lost? This course explores the ruptures in faith through Jewish texts, theological reflections, and contemporary voices. Through selections from Tanakh, Midrash, and Talmud, alongside Hebrew Poets and the writings of figures such as Gershom Scholem, Viktor Frankl, James Fowler, Jill Hammer, David Hartman, Hayim Soloveitchik, Shalom Auslander, Paul Tillich, Louis Ginzberg, and Mara Benjamin, we will examine personal and communal confrontations with and crises of faith. All Hebrew texts will be available in English translation. This course will count as a spirituality or general elective credit. *Last offered: Summer 2025*

G. Liturgy

LIT 101 Introduction to Liturgy
Foundations in the formal graduate level study of Jewish liturgy. Portions of the weekday service will be used as the examples for developing an understanding of the basic liturgical units including: *p'suqei dezimrah, qeriat Shema uvirkhoteha, tefillah*, and *kaddish*. There will be an overview of the issues involved in understanding the worship traditions of the varied streams that make up the contemporary Jewish community. The problems of prayer and the understanding of prayer as the vehicle for establishing and maintaining a relationship with God will be examined. There will be preliminary discussion of the problems associated with developing compelling and vibrant congregational experience. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-6 hours per week

LIT 271 *Tefillah* and Seminar

A time for the AJR community to gather for prayer, study and shared reflection. Each week, two students will be responsible for preparing *tefillah*; A seminar to discuss the experience will follow. (1 credit) *Typically offered every 3 or 4 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2025*

LIT 274 Healing Services

In this course students will learn to create and lead healing services for a variety of settings including sickness, divorce, miscarriage, cancer, infertility, abuse, and more. Care will be taken to pay attention to the planning of the services, the dynamics involved, and the role of technology. The course will be run as a workshop where students can gain practical experience in this important area. This course can count toward the Tefillah and Seminar requirement. *Last offered: Spring 2021*

LIT 305 Shabbat Liturgy
The development of Shabbat liturgical celebrations from Biblical through contemporary periods. A study of the development of: the *Shabbat Amidah* and special *piyyutim*; the *kabbalat Shabbat* service, and the influence of the mystical tradition; home rituals, *kiddush* and *havdalah* along with their function in communal and family life. A survey of practices of various contemporary communities representing all streams of Jewish practice. A

discussion of congregational dynamics and effective strategies for developing effective and compelling Shabbat liturgy. Prerequisite: Introduction to Liturgy (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-5 hours per week

LIT 307 Festival Liturgy
A study of the liturgy throughout the cycle of the Jewish year, from biblical origins to the present era. Features: variations in the basic liturgy, especially the *Amidah* for *Shelosh Regalim*; the development of *Hallel* customs; the form, function and texts of principal *piyyutim*; variations in practice among various rites and contemporary communities; the role of the *Musaf* service along with the theological implications of this part of the liturgy. A discussion of the liturgies that have evolved in response to the history of the Jewish community in the twentieth century *Yom Hashoah, Yom Hazikaron, Yom Ha'atzmaut*. Discussion of creative and innovative rituals that can be introduced into the fixed liturgy. Prerequisite: Introduction to Liturgy (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 3-4 hours per week

LIT 405 The Passover Haggadah

This course explores the origins and development of the Passover Seder, examining texts and traditions from Talmudic and medieval times, as well as the diversity of contemporary Haggadot and Seder practices. This course counts as a general elective. *Last offered: Fall 2023*

LIT 620 Liturgy of *Yamim Noraim*
This interdisciplinary professional seminar for both rabbinic and cantorial students features: *halakhic*, liturgical, historical, professional and spiritual material necessary to prepare for this season; the evolution of the season from biblical through modern periods; a survey of various contemporary *mahzorim*; discussions of strategies for the rabbi and cantor to prepare themselves to lead various congregations through the experience of *Yamim Noraim*. Prerequisite: Introduction to Liturgy (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2025*

H. Mechina

MEC 140 Mechina I
In this intensive class we start to develop an understanding of how the Hebrew language works. We will discuss the idea of roots, nouns, verbs as well as the agreement between them. My method is holistic and integrative. Students will develop an understanding of concepts and principals of the language. We will learn how to read without vowels, and start to gain fluency in reading, writing and speaking. This course covers the introductory units of *Hebrew from Scratch 1* (עברית מן ההתחלה א'). No Credit. *Last offered: Spring 2025*

MEC 145 Mechina II

This course covers the first half of *Hebrew from Scratch 1* (עברית מן ההתחלה א') from Lesson 1 through Lesson 14. It takes the students from learning the mechanics of reading and writing unvoweled Hebrew to active mastery of 500 words, knowledge of the present tense and reading comprehension of dialogues relating to everyday life as well as descriptive, narrative and informative texts on Jewish and Israeli cultural topics**.** No Credit. *Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 2 hours per week

MEC 150 Mechina III

This course covers the second half of *Hebrew from Scratch* 1 (עברית מן ההתחלה א') It takes the students from learning the mechanics of reading and writing unvoweled Hebrew to active mastery of 1200 words, knowledge of the past tense in all of the *גזרות* of Pa'al as well as the past tense of regular verbs in Pi'el, Hif'il and hitpa'el and reading comprehension of dialogues relating to everyday life as well as descriptive, narrative and informative texts on Jewish and Israeli cultural topics**.** No Credit. *Last offered: Spring 2026*

MEC 155 Mechina IV

This course will build upon the foundation grammar covered in Mechina III. The students will continue to work on developing communication skills in Modern Hebrew. They will be introduced to more advanced grammatical patterns, new vocabulary and continue to improve their writing, reading and conversational skills. No Credit. *Last offered: Spring 2025 (this was an extra term of Mechina Hebrew that was added to support students who needed an additional term to prepare for Hebrew 1A)*

I. Philosophy

PHI 301 Bioethics

An exploration of major dilemmas in bio-ethics such as issues around the beginning and the end of life based upon traditional Jewish sources and contemporary thinkers of all outlooks. (1 credit) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Spring 2026*

PHI 311 Medieval Philosophy

The classics of medieval Jewish philosophy will be considered as efforts in the ongoing project to articulate a coherent Jewish world-outlook. How did they seek to integrate the value-orientation of the Bible with the best (Greek) "science" of their age? How might their attempts at integration serve as models for us? Texts to be studied will include: Bible, Plato, Aristotle, Philo, Saadia, Halevi, and Maimonides (with intensive attention devoted to the Guide for the Perplexed). (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 1-5 hours per week

PHI 312 Modern Jewish Philosophy

For the past 350 years, Jewish thinkers have been articulating Judaism in the light of the (ever-developing) modern world-oulook. Familiarity with their ideas can help us in developing those articulations of Judaism that ring true to us on all levels "scientifically, ethically, religiously/spiritually, and with respect to Jewish authenticity. In this course we will encounter and discuss the Jewish philosophies of Spinoza, Mendelssohn, the 19th-century movements (religious and secular), Buber, Rosenzweig, Kaplan, Heschel, Soloveitchik, and a sampling of more recent thinkers. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

PHI 370 Judaism and the Earth

In this course we will examine the ways Judaism relates to the natural world and its preservation. We will look at biblical and rabbinic texts on nature, the preservation of life, and the avoidance of waste, and explore theories of Judaism and the environment from stewardship to deep ecology. We will discover fun, effective and hands-on ways to educate Jews about these issues, and each student will be invited to develop a program for use in environmental education. (2 credits) *Last offered: Fall 2021*

PHI 411 Positive Judaism

One of the most influential and rapidly-growing fields in social science is the burgeoning discipline of Positive Psychology, the study of human flourishing. For a century, psychology focused mostly on reducing or minimizing negative experiences and influences (e.g, trauma, depression, anxiety). Positive Psychology seeks to discover methods for enhancing life satisfaction, engagement, and meaning. The topics addressed by Positive Psychologists include many subjects addressed in depth by Jewish sources. Among those we will cover in this course are perspective, awe, gratitude, hope, compassion, purpose, habit, and character strengths.

This class will bring together contemporary research and ancient wisdom. We will learn evidence-based interventions that increase happiness and integrate them with Jewish practices, texts, and role models. Students will not only study these topics for academic interest, but apply them in their own lives and in their work as Jewish leaders. We will plumb Positive Psychology, Jewish tradition, and the overlap between them as sources for personal and professional growth. This class will be a "lab" in creating a better life for yourself – and for all those you teach and serve. This course can count toward the Education requirement or as an elective. The course will run for the second half of the term, beginning on June 15th. *Last offered: Summer 2026*

PHI 460 Comparative Religion for Jewish Religious Leaders
This course will survey the theologies, practices, core texts, and current circumstances of a variety of religious traditions, including Christianity (Catholicism, Protestantism, Mormonism), Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Wicca. The goal of the course is to increase students' knowledge base around each of these traditions, note their place in our cultural milieu, and consider the possibilities for coexistence and/or dialogue. Special emphasis will be placed on traditions with which our students are likely to come into contact as rabbis. (2 credits) *Last offered: Spring 2021*

PHI 475 Personal Theology
What is my personal theology? How can I articulate it, for myself and for those I plan to teach and influence? In this class, students will systematically face the issues of revelation-and-authority, God, Jewish peoplehood, evil/suffering, and eschatology (death/immortality and Messianism). Texts of contemporary thinkers on these issues will provide a springboard, but the primary objective will be discussion and written articulation of the students own considered theological positions. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 2-4 hours per week

PHI 480 Pluralism: Theory and Application
What is the significance or value of a pluralistic commitment? Is it basically a practical orientation, a relativistic stance, or does it entail acceptance of certain more fundamental affirmations? In this course we will examine some of the various conceptions of pluralism that have been argued " for and against " by social and religious thinkers. Readings will include traditional Judaic texts as well as contemporary writings, especially from within the Jewish community. In addition to grappling with the theory " promising or problematic " of pluralism, we will also give some attention to issues involved in making pluralism work. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2025*

PHI 510 Kabbalistic Souls: Zoharic Journeys in the Mirroring and Intertwining of the Human and the Divine

Souls in motion, each a kaleidoscope of soul-levels, soul-communities extending through generations, the divine itself as a soul-kaleidoscope….When the writers of the Zohar envisioned the soul, they did not imagine a bounded, discrete "self" in the modern Western sense. They saw each soul – and the entire realm of souls – as a precarious striving for unification among various elements, mirroring the divine striving for unification and intertwined with it. The Zoharic writers transcribed their powerful and diverse visions of souls in poetic form, often differing amongst themselves in both subtle and dramatic ways. We will explore these Zoharic visions from a variety of perspectives: the human being as an arduous process of unification, the achievement of higher soul-levels through dreams, the dissociation of souls through anger, souls as the offspring of the divine, the fate of the soul-levels after death, gilgul as the striving for soul-unification across the generations and embracing all of humanity, the divine itself as a process of unification, gilgul as a vision of divine unfolding. Our readings will mostly consist of primary texts, largely drawn from the various strata of the Zoharic literature, including the Tikkunei Ha-Zohar and the Raya Mehemna. We will focus on close readings of these primary texts. Texts will be provided in both the original Aramaic and English translation. This course fulfills the Mysticism requirement. *Last offered: Summer 2023*

PHI 510 Mysticism
This course seeks to bridge the rich world of Jewish mysticism with the challenges and questions facing Jewish spiritual leaders in the modern era. Rather than focusing on a historical-chronological approach, the course is structured around central themes that engage contemporary Jewish community life. Students will be exposed to diverse mystical voices while gaining practical experience in spiritual practices and critically examining their boundaries. Special emphasis will be placed on the relevance of mystical insights to modern communal life, while examining the costs and risks associated with employing mystical tools. *Last offered: Summer 2026*

PHI 511 Entering the Pardes: An Introduction to Early Jewish Mysticism

The enigmatic rabbinic tale of "The Four Who Entered the Pardes" stands at the threshold of Jewish mysticism. Both invitation and warning, it is a foundational site of Jewish reflection on the practices, dangers, and theologies of spiritual ecstasy. In this course, we will enter the Pardes through close reading and historical contextualization, tracing how the story evolved across several rabbinic sources into the cosmologies of the Heikhalot mystics, the philosophical allegories of Maimonides, and the theosophical terrain of Kabbalah. Along the way we will encounter the visionary trajectories of Ben Azzai, Ben Zoma, Aḥer, and Rabbi Akiva; explore the enigmatic "water, water" warning; the theological heresies of Aḥer; and consider how later traditions reimagined the Pardes as both perilous and necessary terrain for seekers of divine experience. Students will engage primary texts in translation, study key secondary scholarship on Jewish mysticism in Late Antiquity, and develop frameworks for teaching and integrating these materials within contemporary Jewish spiritual practice. *Last offered: Summer 2026*

PHI 515 *Sefer Yetzirah*
This will be a course in which we read in its entirety one of the earliest works of Jewish mysticism, *Sefer Yetzirah*, and explore its meanings. We'll consider the spiritual and philosophical underpinnings of the book, learn about its connection to the later *kabbalah*, and also discover "practical *kabbalah*— how mystics might have used this work to transform their consciousness and shape their experience of time, space, and soul. This course can count toward the Mysticism requirement or the spirituality requirement. (2 credits) *Last offered: Spring 2024*

J. Professional Skills

PRO 001, 002, 003, 004, 005, 006 Core Concepts
Seminar in Core Concepts is a sequence of six seminars. It includes Core Concepts Seminar 1 through 6, which comprise three full years of study. The seminars cover some of the fundamental values, concepts and vocabulary of Jewish tradition. The student is expected first to gain a basic acquaintance with these terms and then to delve more deeply into them so as to appreciate their range of significance. The goal of the seminars is to gather information and to develop an integrated way of thinking about and expressing these value-concepts, so that the student may grow from an appreciation of the tradition to active and creative participation in the discourse of Torah. (For M.A. students: 1 credit. For Rabbinical and Cantorial students: 0 credit). *Each section is typically offered once every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-2 hours per week

Ordination students are required to take any four of the six seminar trimesters given in the sequence. Each seminar will meet for one hour and ten minutes weekly, unless it is a combination of two seminars, in which case it will meet for two hours and twenty five minutes. No credit is given for these seminars and no tuition is charged.

Students may only take Core Concepts in trimesters where they are taking other credit bearing classes.

PRO 143 Ritual Skills Workshop – Yammim Noraim

This class will focus on one major block of ritual skills: gaining facility with leading the main parts of the service for the Yamim Nora'im. We will learn simplified versions of the (Ashkenazi) modes and motifs of Ma'ariv, Birkhot HaShahar and Pesukei d'Zimrah, Shaharit, Musaf, Minha, and Neilah. No singing background is required; the purpose of the class is to get students comfortable and fluent with basic davening skills for the High Holy Days. Insofar as we will be exploring the basic musical modes of tefillah, this may also serve as a good basis to davening other services (weekdays, Shabbat, holidays, etc.), because certain musical modes and certain liturgical texts are transferable, providing students with multiple reference points as they continue building their davening skills. Prerequisite: facility with decoding Hebrew. No Credit *Last offered: Summer 2023*

PRO 160 Voice Training for Rabbis

The focus of this class will be concentrated on teaching Rabbinical students how to use their voices correctly and applying that to prayer services. We will explore how simple tools can make one feel empowered to sing with confidence and joy. *Last offered: Summer 2021*

PRO 165 Voice Training for All
The focus of this class will be concentrated on teaching students how to use their voices correctly and how to apply them to prayer services. Each student comes to this class with unique strengths, experiences, and areas for growth. My approach is to meet you where you are, offering guidance and instruction that supports your individual vocal development. Whether you are new to voice training or have prior experience, this class is designed to help you progress at your own pace while building confidence and skill. We will explore how simple tools can make one feel empowered to sing. This course counts as an elective. *Last offered: Summer 2026*

PRO 215 /315 Counseling 1

This course is an introduction to the practice of pastoral counseling, offering the philosophical / religious /psychological underpinnings as well as developing actual practical skills. Emphasis is on acquiring the ability to

actively listen and assess situations, and then respond appropriately, knowing when to offer various kinds of help, and when to recommend appropriate referrals. Specific issues in this course involve counseling for life cycle events, pre-marital meetings, helping people cope with illness, losses and grief/bereavement, as well as crisis situations and the stresses of life. We explore ways to use Jewish texts, song, prayer and ritual for healing. Classes often have an experiential component. *Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 1-2 hours per week

PRO 216 Pharmacology for Clergy

This course has been designed to provide a framework for clergy to understand the basics of psychopharmacology. Teaching goals will include the rationale for prescribing psychiatric medicine, the nature of the conditions prescribed for, the mechanism of the drugs prescribed and the effects and side effects of different classes of medicine. Students will have an opportunity to learn about and think through their responsibilities toward congregants and community members who present themselves as in need of mental health services. These encounters can be difficult to understand and this intersession course will bring issues of psychiatric medication, their usefulness, and use into clearer focus for clergy who contemplate the need for making appropriate referrals. This course will cover the Science and Judaism requirement. *Last offered: Fall 2023*

PRO 217 Scientific Literacy
From COVID-19 to climate change, genetic engineering to artificial intelligence, and exoplanets to human flourishing, we're living through unprecedented changes in science and technology. But these questions also touch on deep theological, philosophical and existential issues. So how do we understand these questions through a Jewish perspective, Jewish tradition, and Jewish law? How can we better understand and communicate scientific findings, especially if we ourselves are not experts in the field? And how do we talk about science and technology when questions surrounding religion and science are often viewed as hot-button political issues? This course will give you an opportunity to better understand science not as a collection of facts, but as a process of discovery, and how you can share these findings with your community. With guest lecturers from across the scientific world, you'll gain a firmer grasp on how you can integrate science and scientific knowledge into your Jewish life. This course will fulfill the Science and Judaism requirement. *Last offered: Spring 2025*

PRO 218 Judaism and Artificial Intelligence

When it comes to technology, is AI a difference of degree or of kind? What skills has it eroded, and what skills is it leading us to realize they may not have been as important as we thought? How will Jewish education and Jewish life be changed by the rise of AI, and what Jewish texts can help us inform our response? In this course, we will explore the relationship among intelligence, consciousness and the soul, helping us understand -- and perhaps even strengthen -- the relationship between humans and AI. While facility with new technology will always be a skill worth knowing, what tools do we need as human beings to navigate this new world, especially as Jews? *Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-2 hours per week

PRO 300 Who are our Adult Learners
Adults bring independence, self-direction, life experiences, readiness, and motivation to their learning. In this course we will better understand the unique opportunities and challenges that synagogue educators face when

teaching the different stages of adult learners. At the end of the course, in addition to analyzing and preparing for adult education, AJR students might understand their own learning style better. (2 credits) *Last offered: Spring 2026*

PRO 310 Homiletics

In this class we will focus on speaking in the context of life cycle events and special occasions, as well as for the High Holidays. We will learn the ways in which clergy formulate and express the wisdom of Judaism in the context of birth, B/Mitzvah, weddings and funerals. We will also discuss the short D'var Torah that often sets the tone for meetings and special events in community life. There is always a great deal of pressure about High Holiday sermons and Divrei Torah. In this class, we will discuss the process by which we decide our topics. And then, through study of the Tanakh and Machzor texts, we will share different approaches to presenting some of our most important ideas in an effective and meaningful way. *Last offered: Summer 2026*

PRO 312 Homiletics

An exploration into the structure and content of the pulpit sermon and the written D'var Torah. Attention will be paid to traditional and nontraditional varieties of pulpit and other rabbinic discourse as well as to available resource materials in the sermonic field. Students will also focus on the structure and development of a written D'var Torah. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2025*

PRO 314 Leading through Crisis

While synagogues are communities within themselves, they are also always a part of a larger community. It's important to know how to connect with political authorities, police and fire departments, and to be a relevant part of a larger community. Additionally, it's important for clergy to be savvy about communication, whether through press or social media, and to recognize the kind of outreach that is not meant just to bring in new members, but to serve the functioning congregation. All of these skills become that much more important during times of communal crisis. This course will give students guidance and a toolbox in dealing with these types of external pieces in leading communities through times of crisis. *Last offered: Spring 2025*

PRO 318 Who is Wise?: Inspiring Models and Best Practices of Informal Education

There's a good chance that you've had a transformative learning experience at camp, in a youth movement, on a travel program, or in another informal educational setting. In this course, you'll have the opportunity to learn models and best practices of informal education, theories of informal education, and to have informal educational experiences that you can reflect on, incorporate into your educational toolbox, and replicate in various educational settings. The material that we cover will be intentionally useful and relevant for future rabbis and cantors. You'll be equipped to deliver meaningful and inspirational informal educational moments and programs to others. *Last offered: Fall 2022*

PRO 329 Lifelong Education: Realities, Possibilities, Goals

This course will explore the world of Lifelong Education. From the youngest of children to the oldest adults, Jews continually learn. But learn …what? How does one decide priorities, set goals and create a vision that meets the needs of a community? And learn … how? There will be an exploration of a variety of models, with a focus on both the benefits and drawbacks. The course includes the issue of relationships among professionals, lay partners and "clients" in the realm of lifelong education. The course is designed for those who will be developing, collaborating, or supporting lifelong education. *Last offered: Summer 2021*

PRO 334 Experiential Jewish Education

As a rabbi or cantor, you will likely have the opportunity to design and facilitate meaningful educational

experiences for learners of all ages and stages. Whether in a synagogue, summer camp, college campus, travel program or youth group setting, there will be opportunities for transformative, rich and deep learning. In this class, we will explore best practices and models of experiential education, and will take a hands-on approach to developing and implementing sample programs. We will examine informal learning opportunities for adults as well as for youth. We will consider tried and true practical tools, and will also push beyond our comfort zone, exploring more inventive ways to create sacred educational engagement. *Last offered: Fall 2023*

PRO 341 Life Cycle I
This course is designed to prepare religious leaders to participate in the various life cycle rituals of the Jewish people. Primary focus will be on the life cycle events from birth through bar/bat mitzvah, leading up to marriage. Role play and reeenactments will allow students to receive feedback on their developing skills. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Spring 2025*

PRO 342 Life Cycle II
This course is a continuation of PRO 341. Death and funerals, unveilings, and conversion constitute the focus of this trimester. A pre-requisite is the ability to translate simple biblical and rabbinic texts. Practical problems and shared experiences from the field will occupy much of class discussion. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

PRO 344 Life Cycle for C2R Students
In this class, students in the Cantors to Rabbis program will engage in a very particular type of exploration into life cycle rituals and experiences. As AJR is dedicated to pluralism, the goal of the course is to broaden students' knowledge base and perspective beyond their denominational training. The presentations and conversations with regard to birth, marriage/divorce, and death will not only expand their "clergy toolbox" but may also deepen the meaning of their current denominational practice. This course is only open to students in the Cantors to Rabbis program, and fulfills a requirement for that program. *Last offered: Summer 2024*

PRO 349 Cancer in the Community

This course will provide rabbis, cantors, and other Jewish professionals with the knowledge and skills to provide much needed psychosocial spiritual support to community members facing cancer or other illness. The training covers topics such as introduction to understanding cancer, where being Jewish may intersect with a cancer experience, how cultural nuances can impact diagnosis, treatment, and survivorship, spiritual concerns, and the creation of caring community and how that impacts both healing and the community-at-large. This course will include a variety of traditional learning and interactive modalities. *Last offered: Spring 2026*

PRO 350 / 355 Conversion
A study of conversion from historical, practical, *halakhic*, and political perspectives. We will address issues relating to preparing individuals for conversion, the process of conversion itself, and the halakhic and political implications of the conversion process. (1 credit) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2025*

PRO 366 Teaching Israel
The Israel Education course will look into some of the major questions and challenges when approaching Israel programs and curricula. We will begin with an initial understanding of why Israel education is important in spiritual communities, and include issues such as what Israel content do we introduce to our community, and how to handle challenging conversations and complex emotions when discussing Israel. *Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-2 hours per week

PRO 422 Leading Through Innovation – Entrepreneurship

This cross-seminary course is for rabbinical & cantorial students who are preparing to take leadership roles in the rapidly changing landscape of Jewish life. The project-based course pulls from design thinking, innovation, social entrepreneurship, and change making leadership. Students will learn how to pilot a project idea under the guidance of course facilitators, and upon course completion will have an opportunity to apply for funding if they choose to launch these projects. This course counts toward the Entrepreneurship requirement. *Last offered: Spring 2024*

PRO 426 Non-Profit Business Skills for Entrepreneurial Clergy

When clergy leave seminary, we often find ourselves being asked to take on roles and tasks that we didn't train for -- especially in the business realm. "Rabbi" or "Cantor" often end up also being a version of CEO, financial planner, and head of marketing. In this intersession course, we will spend two days immersing ourselves in the business skills clergy need the most, especially in entrepreneurial settings where there aren't other staff to help.

Through a combination of readings, expert speakers, panels of clergy in the field, as well as group and individual work, participants will come out of this intersession course with the following:
• Understanding of how business skills impact clergy work and can dramatically elevate impact
• Ability to craft basic business documents, including mission/vision statements, one-pagers, case for giving, websites, and social media posts
• Best practices in board creation and structuring
• Ability to do basic fundraising in a variety of settings
• Understanding of communications plans and how to support organizations with public relations
• Connections to potential mentors in the field
• Greater comfort with the business side of Jewish communal life and knowledge of in what areas they want to expand their skills in the future

The course will include some pre-reading as well as a final assignment. The final assignment will be approximately five pages, in which students will create something they haven't done before -- for example, a fundraising plan, a mission statement, or a marketing plan. *Last offered: Spring 2025*

PRO 428 Leadership in Jewish Non-profit and Synagogue Settings

This intensive two-day course prepares students to navigate and lead within Jewish nonprofit organizations (including synagogues). Through case studies, guest practitioners, and practical frameworks, students will explore the foundational elements of nonprofits, effective lay-professional relationships, fundraising strategy, program design and implementation, and organizational culture. Participants will apply course concepts to a real or imagined organization aligned with their passions, developing an action plan as a post-course assignment. *Last offered: Summer 2026*

PRO 431 Digital Innovation in Jewish Life
This course explores the transformative impact of technology on Jewish community, education, ritual life and spiritual practices. Over 11 sessions, students will delve into the ways digital tools and platforms are reshaping Jewish life, from online learning environments and virtual communities to digital spirituality and ethics. The

course will feature case studies, practical applications, and discussions on the future of Judaism in a digital age. Participants will gain hands-on experience with various technologies, learn strategies for effective integration, and critically assess the implications of a tech-enhanced Jewish experience. This course will count toward the Entrepreneurship requirement. (1 credit) *Last offered: Fall 2024*

PRO 470 Chaplaincy

Welcome to the world of professional chaplaincy. This is an introduction to the role of the Rabbi/Cantor in the modern healthcare setting. This work-study mini-course delves into the inner emotions of a person experiencing spiritual distress because of unwellness along with your own inner emotions as you encounter this person. Includes 40 hours divided between group supervision and Chaplain-Intern visits in a medical institution. Medical clearance is required prior to course beginning. This may include: a note from your MD certifying your health for this work; blood titers for measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella; and TB tests. Your local hospitals or nursing homes may be approved. Because sessions are limited and co-shaped by me and you, classes cannot be made up; consequently, 100% attendance and participation is required. Although this class is a ½-credit course, sessions are spread throughout the trimester to allow sufficient time for clinical service. Required book: *Why Me? Why Anyone?* By Hirshel Jaffe, James Rudin, and Marcia Rudin. (1 credit) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Spring 2025 – This course is no longer a requirement in the Rabbinical or Cantorial Programs*

PRO 490 Difficult Conversations

This course will enable students to identify those situations and topics that are difficult to deal with, and especially hard to have a conversation about. The "difficult conversations" will be suggested by students, and may include areas such as dealing with conflicts or different values, talking about sexuality, having to refuse a request, spending time with the parents of a dying child, confronting a very difficult/demanding congregant– any conversation that seems to always be put off. In brief readings and class discussions, students will develop greater self-awareness, understand habits of thought that lead to avoidance of these conversations, and learn skills and strategies to overcome obstacles and create greater comfort and better communication. Many classes will provide opportunities for supportive problem-solving and practice. (1 credit) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

PRO 560 Counseling II

Counseling II builds on concepts developed in Counseling I (PRO 215) and will emphasize effective ways for clergy to assess and respond to difficult life transitions, complicated family situations, illness (both physical and psychological), personal and community crises, addictions, and conflicts that arise in everyday life. Students will also learn how to appropriately use community resources and make good referrals. Prerequisite: Counseling I (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-2 hours per week

PRO 575 Ethical Communication

The last decade of the 21st Century has ushered in a complicated new era in the history of America and the world. We have learned that there is reality and alternative reality, news and fake news, powerful social media platforms and widely divergent news sources. Important newspapers have folded...but a plethora of podcasts have sprung into being. Platforms such as WhatsApp and LinkedIn have become powerful portals of communication competing with FaceBook, Instagram, Twitter and TikTok. No subject is out of bounds! Billboards are back. In Year Three of the Pandemic we realize that the virtual venues that were once our sole

source of connection to one another during lockdown are here to stay; moreover, they create unbounded opportunities for global reach. Promotion is more democratic -- and problematic -- than ever before. How does the 21st rabbi or cantor navigate their way through this brave new landscape? In this course, you will learn how to use old media and new media alike to agitate, motivate and communicate for maximum effectiveness. You will learn the how-to's of successful promotional event planning (think FlashMobs for a cause) and first-person journalism (think Op-Ed). You will know when to spend the big buck on advertising and when to save your shekels. Bring your passions and be prepared to be empowered by The Ten Commandments of 21st Century Communications for Clergy. This course will count toward the Entrepreneurship requirement. *Last offered: Summer 2023*

PRO 700 Fieldwork Support Seminar
This seminar group focuses upon issues that arise in the course of rabbinical and cantorial work. Participation is required of all students whose work is counting as a required internship experience. Tuition is charged but no academic credit is given for this seminar. (No credit) *Typically offered every trimester. Last offered: Summer 2026*

K. Rabbinics

Prerequisites for most Rabbinics courses:

- Hebrew IA and IB

RAB 100 / 101 Introduction to *Mishnah*
An introduction to the study of *Mishnah*. Selections will be chosen to illustrate the variety of literary styles and subject matter within the *Mishnah*. The course will also include a brief introduction to the scholarly issues regarding the development and redaction of the *Mishnah*. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-5 hours per week

RAB 110 Introduction to *Midrash*
This course focuses on assisting students in developing the skills and confidence needed to read *midrashic* works in their original form. It examines the language and organic logic of *midrash* through a survey of selections from various *aggadic* and *halakhic midrashim*. (2 credits) RAB 150 *Pirke Avot* Ethics of the Fathers, an ancient, yet modern text as relevant today as it was nearly 1,800 years ago. The sage advice contained therein is as valuable a guide today as it was at the time it was written. These *Mishnayot* have been on the best seller list for millennia studied in depth by young and old, students and rabbis, intellectuals and the curious. Its wisdom regarding human nature and its pithy sayings memorized by countless generations are revered by Jews and learned non-Jews and still pondered between *Pesach* and *Shavuot* every year. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-5 hours per week

RAB 150 Pirkei Avot
In this class, we will explore a selection of the mishnayot in Pirkei Avot. Delving deeply into rabbinic, chassidic

and modern texts and commentaries, we will focus our attention on how clergy can use this work to evolve our personal theologies and to inspire and strengthen our spiritual leadership. *Last offered: Summer 2025*

RAB 210 Intermediate Midrash

In this introductory class, we will continue to examine the forms, methods and vocabulary of rabbinic midrash and explore the function that midrash plays in rabbinic interpretation of Torah. We will deepen our understanding of midrashic narrative and character development by delving into Exodus Rabbah, Deuteronomy Rabbah, Pirkei deRabbi Eliezer, and several other sources. This is a text-based class and we will spend time during each session reading midrashim in Hebrew to improve our fluency. Prerequisite: Introduction to Midrash or permission of Instructor. *Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 1-2 hours per week

RAB 230 Introduction to Talmud
A study of the necessary skills in language, logic and text required to read a Talmudic text with the help of only a dictionary. Covers basic Aramaic terms as well as Talmudic œorganic logic. ⍰ Students expected to prepare texts each week without the use of an English translation. Prerequisite: 1 course point *Mishnah* and familiarity with basic *halakhic* terminology. The *Havruta* session is required of all students. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

Homework: Students reported 4-6 hours per week

RAB 231 Introduction to Talmud Continuation of RAB 230.
The *Havruta* session is required of all students. Prerequisite: 2 credits in Talmud. (2 credits) *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2025*

RAB 330 / 331 Intermediate Talmud
This course will continue the study of the Talmud, its structure, and concepts. Tractate to be announced. *Havruta* session is required of all students. Prerequisite: 2 credits in Talmud (2 credits) RAB 331 Intermediate Talmud Continuation of RAB 330, taught in the fall. The *Havruta* session is required of all students. Prerequisite: 3 credits in Talmud and Hebrew must be at least at the level of Hebrew IIA or the equivalent (2 credits) *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

Homework: Students reported 6-10 hours per week

RAB 362 Midrash: Widening the Tent
Although many biblical women have only a few scenes, the unfolding of rabbinic midrash fills out these characters in wonderful ways. In this class, we will explore women in the Torah through close readings of biblical text and a variety of midrashic interpretations. We'll consider the role of modern creative interpretation in widening these stories even further, and try our hand at expanding the midrashic tradition ourselves. Prerequisite: Introduction to Midrash and Hebrew 251 (HEB 1B) or the equivalent. *Last offered: Fall 2024*

RAB 363 Midrash: Architecture of Jewish Consciousness

Midrash is the rabbinic practice of intentionally interacting with Tanakh as a living, generative medium. Beginning with creation, preexistent Torah, revelation, and divine ontology, this course will move through sacred space, miracle and magic, covenantal origins, matriarchal and patriarchal figures, kingship and political theology, and ultimately toward rabbinic constructions of nationhood, desire, gender, and the human

condition. Drawing on tannaitic and amoraic sources (including Midrash Rabbah, Mechilta, Sifra, Sifrei, Pesikta de-Rav Kahana, and select sugyot in Bavli and Yerushalmi) students will engage texts in Hebrew and Aramaic and in translation, focusing on literary analysis. By tracing how the rabbis refract Tanakh across an expansive textual horizon, the seminar explores midrash as theological creativity and as a decisive force in the enduring structures of Jewish consciousness. *Last offered: Summer 2026*

RAB 430 Intermediate/Advanced Talmud
This course will continue the study of the Talmud, its structure, and concepts. Tractate to be announced. Havruta session is required of all students. Prerequisite: 2 credits in Talmud and Hebrew must be at least at the level of Hebrew IIA or the equivalent (2 credits) *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

Homework: Students reported 2-4 hours per week

RAB 530 Advanced Talmud
This course will help students to gain a critical understanding of the structure of the Talmudic text. Through a close-reading of the text along with the use of numerous commentaries, students will learn how to greater appreciate the different voices and complexity of both the text and its religious message. *Havruta* session is required of all students. Prerequisite: 8 credits in Talmud and Hebrew must be at least at the level of Hebrew IIA or the equivalent (2 credits) *Typically offered every 3 trimesters. Last offered: Summer 2026*

L. Spirituality

SPI 325 The Spiritual Dialogue: Our Prayer and Our Learning
In this course we will explore the meaning of prayer as an expression of ourselves to God and our learning as an act of embracing God's expressing God's self to us. Most importantly, we will focus on how we create meaningful prayer services and learning experiences for others and ways that we can make sure that this holy work does not come at the expensive of our own spiritual growth. This course will count as one credit of Parashat Hashavua and one credit of Tefillah and Seminar, or as a Spirituality elective. *Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 1 hour per week

SPI 355 Judaism and the Far East
This course introduces students to a comparative study of biblical religion and Zen Buddhism, revolving around the themes of mindfulness and the human condition. We will particularly focus on a distinct quality of awareness that each of the foundational texts is designed to cultivate in its readers. Although historically unrelated, this course will show the two religious traditions share features and concerns that prove fruitful for a trans-cultural dialogue. The questions we will explore include: According to each tradition, what are some of the essential cognitive qualities that constitute an optimal mode of being human? How does each tradition understand some of the major pitfalls in achieving such quality of consciousness? What relevance, if any, does this inquiry have to our general life in modern societies? No prior knowledge of biblical studies, Judaism, Hebrew, or Buddhism is required. This course fulfills the Spirituality requirement, or can count as a Bible elective. (2 credits) *Last offered: Fall 2025*

SPI 356 Comparative Meditation

This course explores the existential meaning of meditation in liberal societies through a comparative study centered on the seminal guide Shoshikan (A Concise Guide to Stilling and Insight Meditation) by the great

Buddhist master Zhiyi/Chih-i/Chigi (538–597). Zhiyi, who stands alongside Maimonides, Aquinas, and al-Ghazali in spiritual stature, left an unmatched legacy that profoundly shaped Buddhist practice throughout East Asia. Each session focuses on a chapter of the Shoshikan, bringing it into dialogue with Jewish sources and other spiritual traditions. Designed for spiritual seekers and future leaders serving diverse and pluralistic communities, the course combines study and meditative practice to explore how disciplines of attention and compassion can renew spiritual depth, relational awareness, and ethical presence in contemporary life. *Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 3-6 hours per week

SPI 362 Life After Death in Jewish Tradition
In Genesis, there's *She'o*l. In the Talmud, there's resurrection, or the heavenly yeshiva. In kabbalistic times, reincarnation is in. And in modern times, no one agrees. In this course, we'll learn about traditions of the afterlife that Jews have accepted in different eras, and we'll begin to understand how and why Jews have shifted their beliefs across time. This class will prepare participants to understand Jewish traditions concerning death and the afterlife and clarify their own approaches. This course fulfills the Spirituality elective course requirement. (2 credits) *Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 1-3 hours per week

SPI 365 Jewish Dreamwork
Jewish tradition regards dreams as one way God communicates with us. Like the meaning of Torah, the meaning of dreams is complex and changing. In this course, we will cover Jewish rituals around sleep and dreaming (such as nighttime prayers and dream courts), ancient advice from the Talmud on dream interpretation, Torah texts on sacred dreaming, and *kabbalistic* dream stories. We'll learn about dream interpreters throughout Jewish history, and about modern approaches to Jewish dreaming. We will also convene dream circles in which we interpret one another's dreams. (2 credits) *Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 1-2 hours per week

SPI 370 The Architecture of Jewish Ritual: Decoding Ceremonial Action in Jewish Life
In this class, we will study traditional and contemporary Jewish lifecycle and holiday rituals such as the waving of the *lulav* on *Sukkot*, *brit milah*, weddings, and funerals, the American bar/bat mitzvah and *simkhat bat*, aging, healing, and coming out rituals, and other new ceremonies. We will ask questions such as: what are the components of ritual? How does ritual transmit meaning? What elements are common to all ritual? To what extent is the strength of a ritual dependent on its age? What is the role of new rituals? How can we design new rituals to have power and impact? (2 credits) *Typically offered every 4 trimesters. Last offered: Spring 2026*

Homework: Students reported 1-6 hours per week

SPI 375 The Virtual and the Real: "Doing Jewish" Digitally in the 21st Century

Rapid sociological and technological (r)evolutions mean that "doing Jewish" digitally is probably here to stay in some form. What spiritual (r)evolutions should follow suit, and how can spiritual leaders most skillfully nourish and respond to them? Topics will include ritual theory and innovation in digital contexts, emerging halakhot and minhagim of digital community, visuality's gifts and challenges in digital spaces, best practices for psycho-spiritual depth in digital and hybrid contexts, and specific applications for teaching, Shabbat, haggim, conversion, and lifecycle events. Participants will be asked to contribute actively, creatively and skillfully to this rapidly developing new frontier of Jewish spiritual and community life. *Last offered: Summer 2021*

SPI 384 Sacred Arts: Writing

This course will explore the intersection of creativity and spirituality, both of which are particular lenses through which we can view the world. As can be true for the visual arts and the performing arts, writing is a way of expressing our experience. Through engagement with sacred text, essays on the craft of writing, and practical exercises, this course will both break down and expand our perceptions of ourselves and our traditions, and our connections with community and the divine. 1 Credit. *Last offered: Summer 2023*

SPI 385 Jewish Text and Art

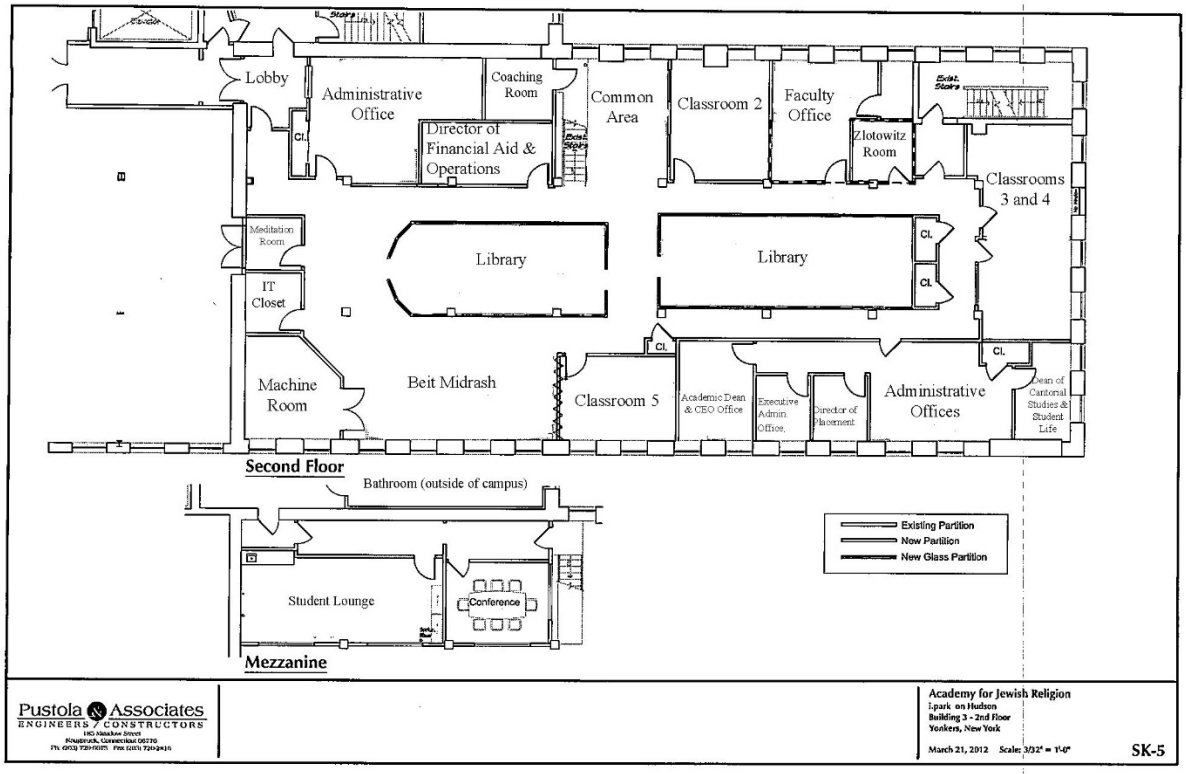
This course will engage the arts as tools to reveal interpretations of sacred text that go beyond explanations available through conventional approaches such as written commentaries. The visual arts include oil pastels and watercolor paints; creative writing including poetry and short story or a short script for a play or film; and music. These will be utilized in a deep encounter with Jewish text from the Bible to the modern period. Students will be challenged not only by applying the arts to reveal midrashic (associative) interpretations as is often the goal in an artistic beit midrash, but also peshat (contextual) interpretations. The process of making art is at least as valuable as any final product the artist may produce. For many people, the act of creating art can itself be a nourishing spiritual practice that connects them to a larger force beyond themselves. This course seeks to create a space where students can experience spiritual connection and growth through their engagement with creative, artistic, expression. This course also seeks to create safe space for students to share their art within a non-judgmental, supportive, environment. This class satisfies the Sacred Arts requirement. *Last offered: Fall 2025*

Homework: Students reported 1-2 hours per week

SPI 400 Contemporary Midrash

In this course, we will examine a wide variety of modern midrashic poetry and prose, in order to learn about the nature and purpose of contemporary midrash. We will also utilize some contemporary tools for creating midrash. We will conclude the course by creating and sharing our own creative midrashim. *Last offered: Spring 2023*

XXXVII. AJR Floorplan



XXXVIII. Appendix – AJR Sexual Harassment Policy

Introduction

The Academy for Jewish Religion (the "Academy") is committed to maintaining a workplace and school environment free from sexual misconduct in any form. Sexual harassment is a form of workplace and academic discrimination. All members of the Academy community are required to work and study in an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. This Policy is one component of the Academy's commitment to a safe, secure and discrimination-free work environment. Sexual harassment and the creation of a sexually hostile work environment is against the law[1] and all employees and students have a legal right to a workplace and academic environment free from sexual harassment and employees and students are urged to report sexual harassment by filing a complaint internally with the Academy. Employees and students can also file a complaint with a government agency or in court under federal, state or local antidiscrimination laws. The locations of the State and Federal agencies are listed at the conclusion of this policy.

Policy

1. The Academy's policy applies to all employees, applicants for employment, applicants for admission, interns, whether paid or unpaid, contractors and persons conducting business, regardless of immigration status, and students of the Academy. In the remainder of this policy, the term "employees" or "students" refers to this collective group.

2. Sexual harassment is offensive, is a violation of our policies, is unlawful, and may subject the Academy to liability for harm to targets of sexual harassment. Harassers may also be individually subject to liability. Employees or students of every level who engage in sexual harassment, including managers and supervisors and professors and teachers and staff who engage in sexual harassment or who allow such behavior to continue, will be penalized for such misconduct.

3. Sexual harassment and discrimination is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Any employee or individual covered by this policy, including students, who engages in sexual harassment or retaliation will be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action (e.g., counseling, suspension, termination, or expulsion).

4. Retaliation Prohibition: No person covered by this policy shall be subject to adverse action because the employee or student reports an incident of sexual harassment, provides information, or otherwise assists in any investigation of a sexual harassment complaint. The Academy will not tolerate such retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports or provides information about suspected sexual harassment. Any employee or student who retaliates against anyone involved in a sexual harassment investigation will be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including termination or expulsion. All employees, paid or unpaid interns or non-employees or students who believe they have been a target of such retaliation may also seek relief in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.

5. The Academy will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation that ensures due process for all parties, whenever an administrator receives a complaint about sexual harassment, or otherwise knows

[1] While this policy specifically addresses sexual harassment, harassment because of and discrimination against persons of all protected classes is prohibited. In New York State, such classes include age, race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, sex, disability, marital status, domestic violence victim status, gender identity and criminal history.

of possible sexual harassment occurring. The Academy will keep the investigation confidential to the extent possible. Effective corrective action will be taken whenever sexual harassment is found to have occurred. All employees, including managers and supervisors, and students are required to cooperate with any internal investigation of sexual harassment.

6. All employees and students are encouraged to report any harassment or behaviors that violate this policy. The Academy will provide all such employees or students a complaint form for reporting harassment and filing complaints.

7. Administrators or others who are aware of harassment in the Academy are required to report any complaint that they receive, or any harassment that they observe or become aware of, to the CEO/Academic Dean or the Dean of Student Life.

What Is "Sexual Harassment"?

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, self-identified or perceived sex, gender expression, gender identity and the status of being transgender.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature, or which is directed at an individual because of that individual's sex when:

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or academic standing or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment, even if the reporting individual is not the intended target of the sexual harassment;

- Such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or enrollment as a student, including when submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual's employment or status as a student in good standing; or

- Such conduct that is so severe, pervasive, or objectively offensive that it functions to effectively deny an individual equal access to an educational program or activity.

A sexually harassing hostile work or academic environment includes, but is not limited to, words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation or physical violence which are of a sexual nature, or which are directed at an individual because of that individual's sex. Sexual harassment also consists of any unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone which are offensive or objectionable to the recipient, which cause the recipient discomfort or humiliation, or which interfere with the recipient's job performance or ability to study.

Sexual harassment also occurs when a person in authority tries to trade job benefits or student status for sexual favors. This can include hiring, promotion, continued employment or any other terms, conditions or privileges of employment or academic status as a student. This is also called "*quid pro quo*" harassment.

Any employee or student who feels harassed should report so that any violation of this policy can be corrected promptly. Any harassing conduct, even a single incident, may be reported under this policy.

Examples of Sexual Harassment

The following describes some of the types of acts that may be unlawful sexual harassment and that are strictly prohibited:

- Physical acts of a sexual nature, such as:
    - Touching, pinching, patting, kissing, hugging, grabbing, brushing against another person's body or poking another person's body;
    - Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults.

- Unwanted, unwelcome, nonconsensual sexual advances or propositions, such as:
    - Requests for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning the target's job performance evaluation, a promotion or other job benefits or detriments or status as a student;
    - Subtle or obvious pressure for unwelcome sexual activities.

- Sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks or jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience, which create a hostile work or study environment.

- Sex stereotyping occurs when conduct or personality traits are considered inappropriate simply because they may not conform to other people's ideas or perceptions about how individuals of a particular sex should act or look.

- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the Academy, such as:
    - Displaying pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional material, reading materials or other materials that are sexually demeaning or pornographic. This includes such sexual displays on workplace computers or cell phones and sharing such displays while in the Academy.

- Hostile actions taken against an individual because of that individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and the status of being transgender, such as:
    - Interfering with, destroying or damaging a person's workstation, tools or equipment, or otherwise interfering with the individual's ability to perform the job or engage in study;
    - Sabotaging an individual's work or school projects;
    - Bullying, yelling, name-calling.

Who can be a target of sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment can occur between any individuals, regardless of their sex or gender. New York Law protects employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees, including independent contractors, and those employed by companies or institutions of higher learning contracting to provide services in the workplace. Harassers can be a superior, a subordinate, a coworker or anyone in the workplace including an independent contractor, contract worker, vendor, client, customer or visitor and including students at the Academy. This policy applies equally to students.

Where can sexual harassment occur?

Unlawful sexual harassment is not limited to the confines of the physical workplace itself or the classrooms. It can occur while employees are traveling for business or at employer sponsored events or parties or Academy events students are attending, including Gatherings. Calls, texts, emails, and social media usage by employees or students can constitute unlawful harassment, even if they occur away from the Academy premises, on personal devices or during non-working hours or outside classrooms. It can also occur when a student is attending classes remotely, such as through Zoom on an electronic device. Sexual harassment can also occur in the context of dating and domestic violence.

Legal Protections and External Remedies

Sexual harassment is not only prohibited by the Academy but is also prohibited by state, federal, and, where applicable, local law.

Aside from the internal process, the Academy employees may also choose to pursue legal remedies with the following governmental entities. While a private attorney is not required to file a complaint with a governmental agency, you may seek the legal advice of an attorney.

In addition to those outlined below, employees in certain industries may have additional legal protections.

State Human Rights Law (HRL)

The Human Rights Law (HRL), codified as N.Y. Executive Law, art. 15, § 290 et seq., applies to all employers in New York State with regard to sexual harassment, and protects employees, paid or unpaid interns and non-employees, regardless of immigration status. A complaint alleging violation of the Human Rights Law may be filed either with the Division of Human Rights (DHR) or in New York State Supreme Court.

Complaints with DHR may be filed any time **within one year** of the harassment. If an individual did not file at DHR, they can sue directly in state court under the HRL, **within three years** of the alleged sexual harassment. An individual may not file with DHR if they have already filed a HRL complaint in state court.

Complaining internally to the Academy does not extend your time to file with DHR or in court. The one year or three years is counted from date of the most recent incident of harassment.

An attorney is not required to file a complaint with DHR, and there is no cost to file with DHR.

DHR will investigate your complaint and determine whether there is probable cause to believe that sexual harassment has occurred. Probable cause cases are forwarded to a public hearing before an administrative law judge. If sexual harassment is found after a hearing, DHR has the power to award relief, which varies but may include requiring your employer to take action to stop the harassment, or redress the damage caused, including paying of monetary damages, attorney's fees and civil fines.

DHR's main office contact information is: NYS Division of Human Rights, One Fordham Plaza, Fourth Floor, Bronx, New York 10458. You may call (718) 741-8400 or visit: www.dhr.ny.gov.

Contact DHR at (888) 392-3644 or visit dhr.ny.gov/complaint for more information about filing a complaint. The website has a complaint form that can be downloaded, filled out, notarized and mailed to DHR. The website also contains contact information for DHR's regional offices across New York State.

Civil Rights Act of 1964

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces federal antidiscrimination laws, including Title VII of the 1964 federal Civil Rights Act (codified as 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.). An individual can file a complaint with the EEOC anytime within 300 days from the harassment. There is no cost to file a complaint with the EEOC. The EEOC will investigate the complaint, and determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that discrimination has occurred, at which point the EEOC will issue a Right to Sue letter permitting the individual to file a complaint in federal court.

The EEOC does not hold hearings or award relief, but may take other action including pursuing cases in federal court on behalf of complaining parties. Federal courts may award remedies if discrimination is found to have occurred. In general, private employers must have at least 15 employees to come within the jurisdiction of the EEOC.

An employee alleging discrimination at work can file a "Charge of Discrimination." The EEOC has district, area, and field offices where complaints can be filed. Contact the EEOC by calling 1-800-6694000 (TTY: 1-800-669-6820), visiting their website at www.eeoc.gov or via email at info@eeoc.gov.

If an individual filed an administrative complaint with DHR, DHR will file the complaint with the EEOC to preserve the right to proceed in federal court.

Local Protections

Many localities enforce laws protecting individuals from sexual harassment and discrimination. In conjunction with submitting a complaint to the Academy, an individual may contact the county, city or town to report sexual misconduct.

Reports may be filed with the New York State Police Campus Sexual Assault Victims Unit by calling the hotline: (844) 845-7269 or the Westchester County Police Department by calling: (914) 864-7700.

Employees who work in New York City may file complaints of sexual harassment with the New York City Commission on Human Rights. Contact their main office at Law Enforcement Bureau of the NYC Commission on Human Rights, 40 Rector Street, 10th Floor, New York, New York; call 311 or (212) 306-7450; or visit www.nyc.gov/html/cchr/html/home/home.shtml.

Contact the Local Police Department

If the harassment involves unwanted physical touching, coerced physical confinement or coerced sex acts, the conduct may constitute a crime. Contact the local police department.

Reporting Sexual Harassment

Preventing sexual misconduct is everyone's responsibility. The Academy cannot prevent or remedy sexual misconduct unless it knows about it. Any employee, student, paid or unpaid intern or applicant for

employment or admission who has been subjected to behavior that may constitute sexual harassment is encouraged to report such behavior to a Title IX Coordinator. If it is the Title IX Coordinator or one of those listed herein who is alleged to be engaged in harassing behavior, any member of the Administration may be contacted and a complaint may be filed with them.

Complaints of sexual misconduct may be made verbally or in writing. All employees and students are encouraged to use the complaint form supplied by the Academy's Academic Dean or other Administrator. Employees who are reporting sexual harassment on behalf of another should use the complaint form and note that it is on another employee's or student's behalf.

Employees, paid or unpaid interns or applicants for employment or admission who believe they have been a target of sexual harassment may also seek assistance in other available forums.

All supervisors and managers or Academy Administrators who receive a complaint or information about suspected sexual harassment, observe what may be sexually harassing behavior or for any reason suspect that sexual harassment is occurring, are required to report such suspected sexual harassment to the Academy's Title IX Coordinators.

In addition to being subject to discipline if they engaged in sexually harassing conduct themselves, supervisors and managers and Administrators will be subject to discipline for failing to report suspected sexual harassment or otherwise knowingly allowing sexual harassment to continue. Supervisors and managers and Administrators will also be subject to discipline for engaging in any retaliation.

Title IX Coordinators

The individuals identified below have been designated as the Academy's Title IX coordinators. Title IX Coordinators are specially trained to work with individuals who report or are accused of sexual misconduct and have knowledge of resources, services, and options available in such circumstances. Complaints of sexual misconduct may be reported to the Academy's Title IX coordinators at any time in-person, by mail, email or telephone.

Contact: Dr. Matthew Goldstone

Location: 28 Wells Ave, Yonkers NY 10701

Phone: (914) 709-4035

Email: mgoldstone@ajr.edu

Contact: Cantor Michael Kasper

Location: 28 Wells Ave, Yonkers NY 10701

Phone: (914) 709-4027

Email: Mkasper@ajr.edu

Contact: Rabbi Beth Kramer-Mazer

Location: 28 Wells Ave, Yonkers NY 10701

Phone: (914) 709-4029

Email: bkramermazer@ajr.edu

The Title IX Coordinator will offer supportive measures, as appropriate, to the person who allegedly suffered misconduct and the person alleged to have committed the misconduct. Supportive measures are non-disciplinary, non-punitive services offered by the Academy, without fee or charge. These measures are available before or after the filing of a formal complaint and even where no formal complaint is filed. Supportive measures serve to protect the safety of all parties, protect the safety of the Academy's educational environment, or deter sexual misconduct all the while ensuring equal access to education programs and activities, without unreasonably burdening any of the parties.

Complaint and Investigation of Sexual Harassment

The individual who is the alleged victim of sexual misconduct is referred to as the "complainant." The individual alleged to have committed the act complained of in violation of policy is referred to as the "respondent."

All complaints or information about sexual harassment will be investigated, however, a complainant's wishes against the initiation of an investigation will be respected unless it is determined that the need for an investigation outweighs the complainant's wishes and is reasonable under the known circumstances. Further, depending on the circumstances of the matter, an informal resolution process may be an option.

An investigation of any complaint, information or knowledge of suspected sexual harassment will be prompt and thorough and will commence immediately and be completed as soon as possible. All persons involved, including complainants, witnesses and alleged harassers will be treated equitably and accorded due process, as outlined below, to protect their rights to a fair and impartial investigation. Any employee or student may be required to cooperate as needed in an investigation of suspected sexual harassment.

Until the grievance process is completed and a determination is made, responsibility for the alleged misconduct will not be presumed, and the Academy will not impose disciplinary actions. The Academy will not tolerate retaliation against individual who file complaints, support another's complaint or participate in an investigation regarding a violation of this policy.

While the grievance process may vary from case to case, when a formal complaint is filed, the process will generally consist of the following actions:[2]

- Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Academy will conduct a preliminary review of the allegations, and take any interim actions (e.g., instructing the respondent to refrain from communications with the complainant) within thirty (30) calendar days, as appropriate. If the complaint is verbal, the individual will be encouraged to complete the "Complaint Form" in writing. If he or she refuses, the Academy will prepare a Complaint Form based on the verbal reporting. The Academy will designate neutral decision-maker(s), who are not the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator, to facilitate the grievance process.

[2] The timeline of the process set forth herein is subject to change. The designated time periods assume that none of the events take place during one of the two major Jewish holiday seasons and that there are no extenuating circumstances affecting the parties, their witnesses, or the responsible Title IX Coordinator(s).

- Prior to the commencement of an investigation, the parties involved will be notified in writing of the following, to the extent such information is known: the identities of the parties involved in the incident, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident. Further, the parties may elect to have an advisor of their choice. Liability will not be assigned until the conclusion of the investigation and a determination is formed.

- If documents, emails or phone records are relevant to the investigation, steps will be taken to obtain and preserve them. Requests for and review of all relevant documents, including all electronic communications will be conducted.

- Each party will have the right to present their case. This includes equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses and to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation.

- At the conclusion of the investigation, a report summarizing the investigation (such as a letter, memo or email), which contains the following will be created and distributed to the parties:

    - A list of relevant documents and evidence reviewed, along with a detailed summary thereof;
    - A list of names of those interviewed, along with a detailed summary of their statements;
    - A timeline of events; and
    - A summary of prior relevant incidents, reported or unreported.

- A live hearing will be held within six (6) weeks of the distribution of the report during which each party may examine the other party and any witnesses and follow-up with a cross-examination before e decision-maker(s). Either party may request that the other party be separated in a different room during the hearing.
- The decision-maker(s) will conduct an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence. At the conclusion of the hearing, a determination as to responsibility will be issued within thirty (30) calendar days of the conclusion of the hearing. The determination will include a summary of the allegations and the procedures undertaken, findings of fact supporting the determination, a statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation. The complainant and respondent will be notified of the final determination.
- Remedial measures, disciplinary actions, and/or sanctions will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The assessment will be based on several factors, including, but not limited to, the severity of the conduct and any prior violations of the policy.
- The complainant may, at any time during the investigation or hearing, dismiss the complaint or withdraw any allegations therein by notifying the Academy in writing. Moreover, the Academy may, upon a complete review of the facts and evidence presented, dismiss the complaint, or certain allegations, if it determines that the alleged conduct does not constitute sexual harassment. Written notice of the dismissal and reason(s) therefor will be promptly sent to both parties.

Appeals

Both the complainant and the respondent are entitled to appeal the determination.

The appeal must be made within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the written notification of the determination. An appeal must be in writing and specify the basis for the appeal. The grounds for appeal are as follows:

1. Procedural errors within the investigation or hearing may have substantially affected the fairness of the process;
2. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time of the investigation or hearing is discovered and could materially affect the outcome; or
3. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against the complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

Both parties will be provided with a reasonable, equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the determination. Upon conclusion of the appeals process, the Academy will issue a decision describing the result of the appeal and both parties will be notified of the decision.

Retaliation

Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual misconduct, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege constitutes retaliation.

Retaliation is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. Unlawful retaliation can be any action that could discourage an individual from coming forward to make or support a sexual harassment claim. An adverse action need not be job-related or study related or occur outside the Academy to constitute unlawful retaliation (e.g., threats of physical violence outside of work or study hours).

The New York State Human Rights Law protects any individual who has engaged in “protected activity.” Protected activity occurs when a person has:

- made a complaint of sexual harassment, either internally or with any anti-discrimination agency;
- testified or assisted in a proceeding involving sexual harassment under the Human Rights Law or other anti-discrimination law;
- opposed sexual harassment by making a verbal or informal complaint to management, or by simply informing a supervisor or manager of harassment or an Academy Administrator;
- reported that another employee or student has been sexually harassed; or
- encouraged a fellow employee or student to report harassment.

Even if the alleged harassment does not turn out to rise to the level of a violation of law, the individual is protected from retaliation if the person had a good faith belief that the practices were unlawful. However, this provision is not intended to protect persons making intentionally false charges of harassment.

Retaliatory conduct is strictly prohibited and should be reported to the Academy. All employees, paid or unpaid interns, or students or non-employees working or studying in the Academy who believe they have been subject to such retaliation should inform their supervisor, manager, or the CEO/Academic Dean or the Dean of Student Life. Individuals who are found to have engaged in retaliation are subject to disciplinary action.

Privacy

The Academy understands that privacy maintains the integrity of the investigation, protects the interests of the parties involved, and precludes retaliatory or defamatory acts. For those reasons, the Academy will protect the identity of persons involved and maintain privacy of all complaints and investigations to the extent reasonably possible, except as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Title IX, or other applicable laws. Any written documentation and associated records in connection with the complaint and grievance process will be kept in a secure and confidential location. Where necessary, information pertaining to the complaint will be disclosed on a need-to-know basis.