



Course Descriptions Spring 2019

- **BIB 118 *Parashat Hashavua***

Rabbi Jeffrey Segelman

In this course, we will explore the weekly Torah portions from *Parashat Yitro* through *Parashat Tazria* (this follows the Torah reading cycle for the trimester.) Particular attention will be given to understanding and appreciating the commentary of Rashi. In addition to our classroom discussions, students will have the opportunity to write and present short divrei Torah directed to a variety of situations. i.e. a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, and *Auf Ruf/ Sheva brakhot*, a eulogy/memorial service, synagogue board meeting, etc. Prerequisite. Students in this course must be at the level of Hebrew I or above. This course will count toward the *Parashat Hashavua* requirement, or as a Bible elective.

(2 credits)

- **BIB 347 *Leviticus Reconsidered: The Reality of the Holy and the Choreography of the Sacred***

Dr. Job Jindo

Many find the book of Leviticus too difficult to understand. Its cultic concerns seem obsolete and boring, and its rules of sacrifices and ritual purities 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 the 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.

(2 credits)

- **CAN 265 Creating Singing Communities**

Cantor Sol Zim

Congregations throughout the world are clamoring for new innovative approaches to “creating a singing community”. Rabbis and cantors will study in-depth how to create a “singing community” through *Neginah* feeling a sense of unity & spirituality in their congregations. Each student will develop the skills to create a simple *niggun* with no words which will mesmerize the community and create a sense of serenity and unity. Students will learn how to take a simple 3-6 word phrase from our rich Liturgy, Torah, Mishnah, Psalms or Pirkei Avot and create a melody for these words that will evoke a sense of oneness for the community. In addition to learning how to compose their own *niggunim*, students will learn how to identify *niggunim* that are already composed, that would be most effective for a singing community. In this class, students will also learn how to create a *niggun* with 2 – 3 movements of different tempos that creates a spirit of excitement & fervor making the community feel uplifted and exhilarated with a compelling togetherness. Students will also learn the skill and technique to create/compose a *niggun* or identify an already existing *niggun* that has antiphonal refrains sung responsively between the cantor/rabbi and congregation which automatically invites congregational participation and ignites a “singing community”. This course will count toward the Choir requirement.

(1 credit)

- **CAN 308 Introduction to Cantillation**

Cantor Robin Joseph

This course will be 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 two tropes. This course is open to both rabbinical and cantorial students.

(2 credits)

- **CAN 437 Advanced *Nusah* - *Hol***

Cantors Sol Zim and Lisa Klinger-Kantor

In this course, students will learn and develop a deep understanding of the vast components of various Motifs, *Nushaot*, Prayer Modes & *Misinaï* tunes for *Y'mot Hahol* - *Shaharit*, *Minhah* and *Ma'ariv* services. Students will learn, demonstrate and master how to lead all the weekday services from the *siddur* by utilizing the correct motifs and the richness of the various *Nushaot* blending them with contemporary sounds and various *niggunim*, thereby creating a bridge between traditional and new sounds. Each student will be required to master the *Nusah Motifs* of the following parts of the Weekday Service: *Birkhot Hashahar*, *P'sukei D'zimrah*, *Shaharit* (including the *Amidah*), *Tahanun*, Torah Service, Concluding Service.

(4 credits)

- **HAL 460 Intermediate Codes**

TBA

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 Shabbat and Holidays with secondary readings that offer more diverse perspectives for modern forms of observance and celebration.

Prerequisite: two trimesters of Introduction to Codes.

(2 credits)

- **HEB 251 Hebrew IB**

Ilana Davidov

This course continues with the second volume of Hebrew from Scratch (*Ivrit min HaHatchala Bet*). Students will expand their vocabulary and advance their aural-oral skills. In grammar, the study of the future tense and major prepositions begun in the previous semester will be concluded, and new topics in syntax and the verb system will be introduced. Prerequisite: Hebrew IA or the equivalent

(4 credits)

- **HEB 320 Biblical Hebrew**

Rabbi Peg Kershenbaum

Introduction to Biblical Hebrew: examination of and exercise in the grammar, syntax and vocabulary of Biblical Hebrew, for the development of competence in understanding and translating the classical Biblical texts (with some attention to major differences between BH, Rabbinic and Modern Hebrew) Objectives: by the end of this course, you will be able to identify all parts of speech including all the major *binyanim* in all their forms as they occur in prose passages of the *Tanakh*. You will be able to use BDB efficiently and accurately to find unfamiliar vocabulary by applying information learned about the forms and structures of different parts of speech. You will be able to translate connected biblical prose passages accurately with the help of BDB and give analyses of specified words and constructions. You will be able to use major conjunctive and disjunctive cantillation signs to aid in correct phrasing of syntactic units of the texts examined. And, if all goes according to plan, you'll even enjoy the process!

(2 credits)

- **HIS 355 Israeli History and Culture**

TBA

This course will survey Israeli culture, the variety of its communities, the role of religion, and how these aspects of the Israeli experience are a product of modern Israeli history and the forces that led to the creation of the State of Israel.

(2 credits)

- **INT 365 Joy and Play in Jewish Tradition: Sacred Text and Spiritual Practice**

Rabbi D. Markus

Jewish textual and spiritual traditions centrally feature joy, play and laughter – so, *nu*, can't Jewish life be more joyful? Using Bible, liturgy, Talmud, pastoral literature and tools of Positive Psychology, this course will explore how joy and play (and their absence) can shape clergy service and the paths of spiritual seekers. Topics will include *Tanakh* theologies of

happiness; valences of joy in Jewish time; liturgies and *halakhot* of joy; pastoral use (and misuse) of humor and satire; the psychology of play in spiritual formation; and the role of play in ritual craft. This course also will probe the shadow side of joy, including issues of clergy role and spiritual bypassing. No prerequisites, though some background in liturgy, rabbinics, and counseling would be helpful. This course will count toward the Spirituality requirement, or as an elective.

(2 credits)

- **LIT 101 Introduction to Liturgy**

Rabbi Jeff Hoffman

Foundations in the academic study of Jewish liturgy including questions of history, textual sources, and literary meaning. Added to that will be inquiries into spiritual meaning for today's Jews. Portions of the weekday service will be used as the examples for developing an understanding of the basic liturgical units: *Birkhot HaShahar*, *Pesukei DeZimrah*, *Keri'at Shema U'Virkhoteha*, *Amidah*, and *Tahanun*. Approaches of the varied streams of contemporary Judaism will be taken into consideration. Prerequisite. Students in this course must be at the level of Hebrew I or above.

(2 credits)

- **LIT 271 Creating Meaningful Services: Tefillah and Seminar**

Cantor Michael Kasper

Part of almost every cantor or rabbi's professional duties is to take on the role of *Shaliah Tzibbur*. Performing that job well, being the emissary of the community before God, requires education and practice. However, perhaps the most important ingredient is thoughtfulness. This course is designed to give every participant an opportunity to think critically about their intention, their role, and the needs of their community. These may all change in an instant. The successful leaders of public prayer have the ability to move nimbly into unexpected and sometimes difficult emotional spaces. Services that are meaningful and prayerful will be the signature aspiration of each class during the trimester.

(1 credit)

- **MEC 130 Mechina**

Ilana Davidov

This course is a continuation of the first trimester of Mechina using the first volume of *Hebrew from Scratch* (עברית מן ההתחלה א'). Students will read short texts and conversations. 350 additional words will be presented and practiced. The major grammatical topic will be the past tense of all active *binyanim* and also the declensions of various prepositions.

(0 credits)

- **PHI 312 Modern Philosophy**

Dr. Len Levin

Issues of modern Jewish thought will be studied through familiarization with principal works of the major modern Jewish philosophers—including Spinoza, Mendelssohn, Buber, Rosenzweig, Kaplan, Heschel, and Soloveitchik—as well as representative thinkers of the

major modern and contemporary movements. The focus will be on how all of these thinkers and movements adapted Jewish tradition—each in their own way—to the intellectual, cultural and political challenges of modernity.

(2 credits)

- **PHI 340 Bioethics**

Rabbi Jill Hackell, M.D.

Technological advancements in medicine have brought with them bio-ethical issues of increasing complexity. This course will examine issues pertinent to today's bio-ethical dialogue from a Jewish point of view, including issues such as organ donation, end-of-life issues, reproduction, genetic screening, illness prevention and immunization. How does the Jewish way of looking at these issues compare and contrast with the general societal discussion? What are the governing principles of bio-ethical argument in each of these? How are ancient Jewish sources reconciled with modern technology in guiding thinking about these issues?

(1 credit)

- **PRO 410 Positive Psychology**

Rabbi Debra Orenstein

One of the most influential and fast-growing fields in social science is the burgeoning discipline of Positive Psychology, the study of human flourishing. For a century, psychology has 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, including joy, contentment, awe, gratitude, forgiveness, humility, hope, mindfulness, purpose, compassion, transformation, habits and rituals, community, and character strengths.

This class will bring together the latest in modern research and ancient Jewish wisdom. We will learn “life hacks” and evidence-based practices that increase happiness *and* integrate them with time-honored Jewish practices and insights. 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 will count toward the Spirituality requirement.

(2 credits)

- **PRO 006 Core Concepts VI**

Dr. Ora Horn Prouser

This is a multi-year sequence of seminars. The seminars cover some of the fundamental values, concepts and vocabulary of Jewish tradition. Students are expected to first gain a basic acquaintance with these terms and to then delve more deeply into them so as to appreciate their range of significance. The goal of the seminars is not simply to gather

information, but to develop an integrated way of thinking about and expressing these value concepts, so that students may grow from having an appreciation of the tradition to actively and creatively participating in the discourse of Torah. Every student is required to take two years of the seminars given in the sequence, but they need not be taken in order. Core Concepts VI begins with the terms *avot/imahot*.

(0 credits)

- **PRO 160 Voice Training for Rabbis**

Cantor Lisa Klinger-Kantor

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.

(1 credit)

- **PRO 215 Counseling I**

Arline Duker

This course is an introduction to the practice of pastoral counseling, offering both 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.

(2 credits)

- **PRO 319 Meeting the Needs of All Jewish Learners**

Dr. Renee Holtz

Every class we will ever teach is made up of students, be they in pre-school or Adult Ed, afternoon Hebrew School or 1st period Monday morning, Introduction to Judaism or the seventh year of weekly Torah study. These students are all learners with individual strengths and needs that make it easy for them to grasp concepts or hard, perhaps simple to master a complicated *sugya* but challenging to remember which animals are kosher. It is up to us, their teachers to present information, model examples, and demonstrate interpretation in ways that all can achieve success. Knowing what is typical in a learner and what needs we can anticipate will present themselves is critical to being able to vary our instruction. Language processing, reading vulnerabilities, executive dysfunctions, especially in attention, disorders in writing, even hearing or vision disabilities can be accommodated in our classrooms if we understand them and know what to do. How we do this, how we even know what our students need, will be the subject of this course this term. This course will count toward the Education requirement.

(2 credits)

- **PRO 336 Guitar**

Stanley Dorn

This is a first course in guitar, designed to teach Cantors and Rabbis how to use the guitar to accompany themselves and/or congregation singers. The approach is two-pronged, using a folk-based style to teach basic accompanying skills and a classical approach to teach note reading and the ability to play more complex textures. As ability develops, the two styles will be blended to create a comprehensive and easy familiarity with the instrument and its potential. Previous experience with guitar, though helpful, is not required. This course will count as the Guitar requirement for cantorial students, and as an elective for rabbinical students.

(2 credits)

- **PRO 376 Anti-Semitism**

TBA

The rise of anti-Semitism, both in the United States and throughout the world, is alarming. We will look at anti-Semitism from historical, sociological, and psychological perspectives. In addition, we will consider ways that Jewish leaders and communities can work to confront this phenomenon. This class will serve as an elective.

(2 credits)

- **PRO 391 Reaching Out to World Jewry**

Dr. Ora Horn Prouser

This class will be a project-based seminar. We are starting with the goal of figuring out how AJR can serve smaller Jewish communities throughout the world. We will learn from others who do this work, we will make contacts within pilot communities and work together with them to determine how to best serve their needs. By the end of this class we hope to have worked through the logistical, technological, educational, and communal issues involved in this goal, and be ready to pilot a program. This course counts towards the Entrepreneurial Skills requirement.

(1 credit)

- **PRO 470 Chaplaincy**

Rabbi Naomi Kalish

This course will accompany chaplaincy internships. In class students will gain a theoretical approach to spiritual care-giving and skill development and have the opportunity to discuss and explore their chaplaincy experiences. Students will receive an introduction to the core methods of professional chaplaincy education, including the writing verbatim reports, spiritual assessment and theological reflection. Students need to secure an internship of at least 40 hours in a chaplaincy setting (hospital, senior housing, etc.). They may contact Rabbi Kalish for consultation in setting these up.

(1 credit)

- **PRO 700 FWSS**

TBA

This seminar group focuses on issues that arise in the course of rabbinical and cantorial work. Students will explore the challenges that they face in their work and in their developing rabbinate/cantorate through the presentation of a case study. Participation is mandatory for all students whose work is counting as a required internship experience. All fieldwork must be approved prior to the beginning of the semester by Cantor Michael Kasper. Tuition is charged but no academic credit is given for this seminar.

(0 credits)

- **RAB 230 Introduction to Talmud**

Rabbi Jeff Hoffman

Students will acquire the skills to identify the component parts of the talmudic *sugya* and the relationships between them. This includes the ability to recognize the elements and functions of the talmudic argument, especially the *kushia* (objection) and the *terutz* (resolution). This also includes the ability to distinguish between tannaitic, amoraic, and *stam* (anonymous) passages. Students will also learn the basics of talmudic terminology as well as basic Aramaic vocabulary and grammar. Students are expected to prepare texts with the help of dictionaries, Hebrew commentaries and vocabulary lists, with the limited use of English translations. The *Havruta* session is required of all students. Prerequisite: Introduction to Mishnah.

(2 credits)

- **RAB 400 Magic and Demons**

Rabbi Matthew Goldstone

For thousands of years people lived in a world filled with magic and inhabited by demons. While some might expect Judaism to oppose such affronts to monotheistic ideals, we actually find that Jewish tradition itself is steeped in the supernatural. From amulets and magic bowls to liliths and exorcism, in this course we will explore the many expressions of magic and the demonic in Jewish history from the Bible through today. Examining both texts and material artifacts, this course will provide students with a variety of new and interesting sources for teaching about a lesser known side of Judaism. This course will count as an elective.

(2 credits)

- **RAB 530 Intermediate/Advanced Talmud**

Rabbi Matthew Goldstone

This course will hone students' abilities to critically read, parse, and understand Talmudic material. Emphasis will be placed on learning some of the key recurring terms and structures found in the Talmud as well as on the pedagogical application of the material that we cover. A Havruta session is required of all students. We urge students to try to join the Havruta time slot on Monday mornings. If that can't work, please speak with the instructor to make

alternative plans. Prerequisite: At least three trimesters of Talmud.
(2 credits)

- **SPI 120 Meditation**

Rabbi Debra Orenstein

This course will offer an introduction based on primary sources, secondary sources, and experiential exercises. We will read Jewish literature on various forms and theories of meditation, practice meditative techniques, and create exercises that integrate meditation into services, classes, and meetings that happen in Jewish settings. A significant portion of each class will be devoted to meditation and learning by doing. This course will count toward the Spirituality requirement.

(1 credit)