



Course Descriptions Spring 2022

- **BIB 415 The Haftarah as Biblical and Liturgical Literature**

Dr. Howard Markose

This course will study the additions of prophetic sections (*Haftarah*) introduced into the liturgy of Jewish Sabbath and holiday prayer services. We will consider how the chanting of a Haftarah in the synagogue might contribute to the Torah service. Sections of the prophets will be examined from the perspective of their own history (Israel in its ancient Near Eastern setting) as well as their choice as a *Haftarah* chanted during the Jewish Calendar year.

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)

- **BIB 421 Religion, Politics, and Leadership Failure in the Bible: Studies in the Book of Samuel**

Dr. Job Jindo

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.

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)

- **BIB 341 Generations of Sky and Earth: Science in Dialogue with Biblical Imagery**

Rabbi Jill Hammer

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. For example, how does understanding the underground communications of trees graft new layers of meaning onto the metaphor of the Tree of Life? How does considering the formation of stars and the explosion of supernovas shed light on our understanding of God’s promise to Abraham that his descendants will be like the stars? That is, how might contemporary people relate to the images of the Bible, informed by the sciences? What does each biblical source bring to the conversation about our relationship

with the natural world? By understanding the science behind these phenomena, as well as the ways that the Bible perceives them, students will be able to deepen the theological and poetic impact that this imagery can have for themselves and those they serve. This course will serve as the Science and Judaism requirement.

This course will involve five guest scientists:

Dr. Allan Frei, Barry Pollack, Dr. Robert Pollack, Dr. Zeeve Rogoszinski, and Jessica Rubin.
(2 credits)

- **CAN 115 Introduction to Modes**

Cantor Joseph Ness

The Modes are central to the understanding of the performative skills of leading the davening in a service. With practical application we will look into the various services by examining in some detail how the modes are integrated into each liturgy.

(1 credit)

- **CAN 280 Hand Percussion for Cantors and Rabbis**

Brian Melick

This course is designed to develop a strong musical voice with your drum by exploring multiple ways to release its many different colors, tones and textures. The objective of this class is to give each participant a strong base of hand technique utilizing the complete underside of the hand. This will be accomplished by offering a variety of rhythm exercises inspired by music styles from around the world. Students will experience the importance and power of keeping steady time as well as developing a strong sense of pulse both linearly and circularly. At the conclusion of the class each participant will not only have experienced prearranged rhythm music but more importantly they will have the foundational skills necessary to create their own original music in order to accompany themselves and others. No previous percussion knowledge necessary. This course will count as an elective for both rabbinical and cantorial students.

(1 credit)

- **CAN 355 Create Neginah (Song) For Liturgical Texts**

Cantor Sol Zim

Public Prayer is challenging when it comes to creating a presence of spirituality in Congregations. *Neginah* can create a spiritual elevation and a spark, making the worshiper feel uplifted and exhilarated. Students will learn how to create their own melody to liturgical prayers. They will also learn how antiphonal refrains can invite participation and togetherness and ultimately creates a sense of oneness and unity in the worship service. Students will learn how to blend the richness of Jewish Liturgy together with contemporary folk and Chassidic sounds...the result is...a blessing. This course will serve as an elective for both rabbinical and cantorial students.

(1 credit)

- **CAN 385 Peace Studies**

Dr. Marc Gopin

An Introduction to Jewish Peace Studies will entail an in-depth interactive study of conflict resolution theory and practice through the prism of ancient Biblical, Talmudic and *Halakic* ethical values. The course will engage an introduction to conflict analysis and conflict resolution theory and practice, and then launch into Jewish traditional peace values as they relate to treatment of (1) the self, (2) the Other, (3) the Estranged Other(s), (4) community/society, and (5) the earth and life itself. This course counts toward the Peace Studies requirement for cantorial and Kol Bo students, and as an elective for rabbinical 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, *Nusḥaot*, Prayer Modes and *Misina'i* tunes for *Y'mot Hahol* - *Shaharit*, *Minḥab* 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 *Nusḥaot* 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, and the concluding service.
(4 credits)
- **HAL 480 Responsa**
Dr. Matthew Goldstone
In this course we will conduct a close reading of rabbinic responsa from a variety of historic periods, and become familiar with their authors, 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. As part of our investigation, we will examine the nature of halakha in light of various theories as to how the *halakbic* process works.
Prerequisite: HEB 2A or equivalent
(2 credits)
- **HAL 510 Advanced Codes**
Rabbi Yonah Lavery-Yisraeli
This course will focus on R. Yosef Karo's *Shulhan Arukh*, a major medieval code of Jewish law that continues to inform contemporary practice. We will study some of the important laws related to mourning and dietary practice, occasionally supplemented by secondary readings from alternate sources.
Prerequisite: two trimesters of Introduction to Codes
(2 credits)
- **HEB 250 Hebrew IA**
Yifat Avner
This course will build upon the foundation grammar covered in Mechina Hebrew. Students will use the book *Hebrew from Scratch, part II*. The students will continue to work on developing communications 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.
(4 credits)
- **HEB 251 Hebrew IB**
Ilana Davidov
This course will bring students to Chapter 8–9 of the second volume of *Hebrew from Scratch* (עברית מן ההתחלה ב'). The focus of the course is on reading comprehension of adapted informative and narrative texts in Modern Hebrew, with an emphasis on vocabulary development and dictionary look-up skills. The grammatical component of the course mostly follows the textbook. It includes *Pi'el*, *Hitpa'el* in all tenses, passive verbs in *Pa'al*, and more prepositions. Written and oral assignments will enhance communicative skills while improving absorption and integration of vocabulary and grammar.
Prerequisite: Hebrew IA or the equivalent (4 credits)

- **HEB 400 Hebrew IIIA**

Ilana Davidov

The purpose of this course is to transition students from an intermediate to an advanced 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, presentations and listening practice, and via reading and writing assignments.

Prerequisite: Hebrew IIB or the equivalent

(4 credits)

- **HIS 350 American Jewish History**

Dr. Tova Markenson

This course will explore how Jewish history and culture in the Americas intersects with marginalized experiences that traditional narratives exclude. Students will explore questions of Jewishness and belonging through studying macro- and micro- histories alongside critical studies of gender, race, and ethnicity. Through honing a nuanced understanding of how historians construct Jewish history, students will strengthen their abilities to honor the multiplicity of experiences that shape the present and future of Jewish life.

(2 credits)

- **INT 365 Joy and Play**

Rabbi David Markus

Jewish tradition centrally features joy, happiness, laughter and play — so, *nu*, can Jewish spiritual life be more joyful? The Talmud recounts that even God reserves a quarter of each day for play, jesters who lift others from sadness have a special share in the World to Come, and *hasidic* tradition valorizes and even venerates joy in spiritual life. But not all of Jewish tradition's forebears were so happy about happiness. Some banned full-throated laughter until the World to Come, and they privileged piety over parties.

What can tradition's multivocality about joy and play teach us as spiritual seekers, servants and leaders for a pluralistic Judaism? Together we'll seek answers from sacred text, tradition and the contexts in which we pray, play and serve. As we'll see, the journey of joy can get very real very fast: joy can be serious business!

Using Bible, liturgy, Talmud, *midrash*, *basidut*, pastoral literature and positive psychology, this course will explore how joy and play (and their absence) shape Jewish thought, clergy service and spiritual experience. Topics will include theologies of happiness; valences of joy in calendrical time; liturgies and *halakhot* of joy; pastoral (mis)use of humor; and the role of play in spiritual formation and ritual craft. This course also will probe joy's shadow side, including spiritual bypassing.

Materials will invite us to (re)claim an authentic functional approach to joy and play in personal and communal spirituality. This course can count as a spirituality elective, or as a general elective.

(2 credits)

- **LIT 305 Shabbat Liturgy**

Rabbi Jeff Hoffman

A study of the development of the major prayers that make up all four of the *Shabbat* worship services. Special emphasis will be placed on the influence of the mystical tradition on *Kabbalat Shabbat*. Texts of central prayers will be analyzed from a historical, literary, and spiritual perspective. Attention will be paid to a survey of practices of various contemporary communities representing various streams of Jewish practice as well as to congregational dynamics and effective strategies for developing effective and compelling *Shabbat* liturgy.

Prerequisite: Introduction to Liturgy (2 credits)

- **PHI 312 Modern Philosophy**

Dr. Len Levin

The 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 510 The History and Future of Kabbalah**

Dr. David Seidenberg

In this class, students will gain a clear understanding of the history of Kabbalah and its ebbs and flows, and will be invited to see themselves as part of that stream. What are the cultural contexts in which Kabbalah thrived, and what did Kabbalah mean to the Jewish world in the past? What does Kabbalah mean to us now, and how might that guide the evolution of Kabbalah into the future? The class will cover the Bahir and its antecedents, the Zohar and its circle, Cordeveran and Lurianic Kabbalah, Shabtai Zvi, and Chasidut. We will also look at Kabbalah's impact on the Renaissance, how Kabbalistic humanism became a tool in the Jewish world for understanding science, and the role of Kabbalah in modern-day Jewish Renewal.

(2 credits)

- **PRO 005 Core Concepts V**

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 four trimesters of the seminars given in the sequence, but they need not be taken in order.

Core Concepts III begins with the term *ʾot*. No tuition is charged for this course.

(No credit)

- **PRO 015 Ritual Skills**

Rabbi/Cantor Sam Levine

This workshop will provide an opportunity for students to work on individual ritual skills requirements. The topics covered will be determined when there is clarity as to the participants of the class and their needs

(No credit)

- **PRO 216 What Clergy Need to Know About Psychopharmacology: A Basic Understanding**

Cantor Michael Kasper and Dr. David Aftergood

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.

(2 credits)

- **PRO 422 Entrepreneurship: Leading Through Innovation**

Rabbis Julia Appel, Elan Babchuck, and Cyd Weissman

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. This course is scheduled for Tuesdays 6:30 – 8:30 EST. There is an alternate section for this class on Mondays 2:15 – 4:15 EST. This course begins on January 24th and runs on a somewhat different calendar. This course will count toward the Entrepreneurship requirement.

(2 credits)

- **PRO 560 Counseling II**

Cantor Michael Kasper

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 begin to discern the difference between situations appropriately handled by clergy and ones that call for referrals to other counseling professionals.

Prerequisite: Counseling I

(2 credits)

- **PRO 700 FWSS**

Rabbi Jeffrey Segelman

This seminar group focuses upon 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 required of all students whose work is counting as a required internship experience. All fieldwork must be approved prior to the beginning of the trimester by Rabbi Jeffrey Segelman. Tuition is charged but no academic course credit is given for this seminar.

(No credit)

- **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 430 Intermediate/Advanced Talmud**

Dr. Matthew Goldstone

In this course students will continue to hone their abilities to critically read, parse, and understand Talmudic material. This semester will focus on *sugyot* that address “Big Concepts” such as the problem of evil, the value of martyrdom, and the origins of rabbinic Judaism. We will explore the ways that these sources impact us on a personal and spiritual level, as well as possible pedagogical applications for teaching these sources to others.

Prerequisite: 3 trimesters of Talmud and HEB 2A or equivalent

(2 credits)

- **SPI 365 Dreamwork**

Rabbi Jill Hammer

In this class, we will study Jewish sacred texts related to dreams and Jewish traditions around dream practice. We will explore rituals for going to sleep and for waking up, for interpreting dreams and for coping with nightmares. We will consider how the images in dreams may be useful to us and how dream practice can be a vibrant part of Jewish spiritual life. We will encounter ways that contemporary Jewish dreamworkers work with dreaming, and we will have the opportunity to share and work with our own dreams. Each student will be asked to keep a dream journal as a spiritual practice (with accommodations for those who have trouble remembering dreams). Students will develop their own methodology of Jewish dreamwork, by discussing readings and experiences in class, by working with their dream journals, and by writing a final paper on an aspect of Jewish dream practice. This course will count as a Spirituality elective.

(2 credits)