2025 COURSE CATALOG

prs

בית המדרש הרבני פלורליסטי

Pluralistic Rabbinical Seminary

JewishPluralism.org

WELCOME TO THE FUTURE

"We are training future rabbis for the future of Judaism." -PRS Mission Statement

At Pluralistic Rabbinical Seminary all branches of Judaism come together to create vibrant, profound learning for our students. Our rabbis and Jewish educators have been classically trained and represent major movements in Judaism. We train rabbis who will strengthen the Jewish people through innovation and forward thinking, being of service to affiliated and unaffiliated Jews equally.

Do you think you have what it takes to make a difference in the Jewish community, both locally and globally? If so, I encourage your interest in becoming a part of Pluralistic Rabbinical Seminary. I invite you to read through our website and become familiar with what we have to offer. You will find a very diverse community of learners and educators at our seminary, and a unique approach to education. Together we can change the face of Judaism.

- Rabbi Sandy Zisser

Our Mission

The mission of Pluralistic Rabbinical Seminary is to bring the Jewish community around the world together.

Our Vision

Pluralistic Rabbinical Seminary (PRS) offers the very best in practical, distance learning-based rabbinical education. PRS is the only rabbinical school with a distinct focus on helping students launch innovative Jewish projects around the world. By simultaneously incubating future rabbis and future Jewish organizations, we are creating maximum benefit to Jewish life. PRS has three goals: to train and ordain future rabbis for the future of Judaism, to provide the absolute best distance-based rabbinical education possible, and to be a leader in Jewish pluralism.

WHAT KIND OF STUDENT ARE YOU?

I AM . . .	WE OFFER . . .	YOU GET . . .
A Disrupter, An Innovator, An Entrepreneur	Incubation of Jewish Startups	The confidence coming out of the program to operate groundbreaking Jewish projects in the non-profit and for-profit sectors
Looking for a rigorous online program	High Quality, Meaningful Learning	A two-year program, with an educational focus on practical rabbinics and the skills needed to be a 21st century rabbi
Ready to move past (but learn from) different Jewish movements	Multi-Denominational Smicha	The first and only online rabbinical program with Reform, Conservative/Masorti, and Independent rabbis and educators

COURSE OUTLINE

The following is our current list of available courses. Note that the academic courses, both live and moderated (Slack), may be scheduled at different times based on instructor availability.

ACADEMIC COURSES

Students are required to complete all of the following courses during their two-year cohort.

YEAR ONE
Classical Hebrew I – *Dr. Danny Mond*
Classical Hebrew II – *Hadassah Wrightman*
Jewish Ethical Dilemmas - *Rabbi Jill Levy*
Jewish History I – *Ariel Simon*
Jewish Liturgy I – *Rabbi Dr. Joshua Cahan*
Jewish Theology – *Rabbi Sandy Zisser*
Pastoral Care I – *Rabbi Fredda Cohen*
People of the Book – *Dr. Danny Mond*
Talmud 1 – *Rabbi Eric Wasser*

YEAR TWO
Derech Shir – *Hadassah Wrightman*
Homiletics – *Rabbi Patrick Beaulier*
Jewish History II – *Rabbi Sandy Zisser*
Jewish Liturgy II – *Rabbi Dr. Joshua Cahan*
Modern Hebrew - Dr. Danny Mond
Pastoral Care II – *Rabbi Fredda Cohen*
Practical Rabbinics – *Rabbi Patrick Beaulier*
Talmud II – *Rabbi Eric Wasser*
Torah Interpretation through the Ages – *Rabbi Jill Levy*

INNOVATION & SYNAGOGUE ENGAGEMENT COURSES

Students are required to complete three (3) of the following courses during their cohort.

INNOVATION
Innovation I: Business Model Canvas - *Rabbi Patrick Beaulier*
Innovation II: Jewish Innovation Unbound - *Rabbi Lex Rofeberg with Rabbi Patrick Beaulier*
Innovation III: Clergypreneur Series - *Rabbi Patrick Beaulier*

SYNAGOGUE ENGAGEMENT
Adult Jewish Education Independent Study I & II - *Rabbi Sandy Zisser*
High Holidays Service Leadership I-III - *Rabbi Sandy Zisser*
Children's Jewish Education Independent Study I & II - *Rabbi Sandy Zisser*
Shabbat Service Leadership I & II - *Rabbi Sandy Zisser*

ELECTIVE COURSES

Students are required to complete twenty-one (21) credits of asynchronous electives by the end of their cohort. Courses are between one half and one credit each. Courses below are organized by subject.

JEWISH THOUGHT
Introduction to Jewish Mysticism - *Rabbi Matthew Ponak*
Judaism, Jewish Community & Race - *Yitz Jordan, Abbie Yamamoto, Shawn Harris, Cristina Domínguez Ramírez & Eli Forman*
Kabbalah 101 & 102 - *Rabbi Ileanah Carazo*
LGBTQ+ Jewish Thinking - *Rabbi Nachshon Siritsky*
Navigating Israel Issues in the Diaspora - *Michael Morgenthau*
The Problem of Evil & Theodicy - *Rabbi Patrick Beaulier*
UnYeshiva (1-3) - *Judaism Unbound*

ELECTIVE COURSES

HISTORY
Antisemitism: From Its Origins to the Present - *Yad VaShem*
Chosen Issues in Holocaust History - *Yad VaShem*
The Conflict in 4 Acts - *Dr. Dan Aviv*
Conversion to Judaism: History & Today - *Rabbi Patrick Beaulier*
The Fall & Rise of Jerusalem - *Tel Aviv University*
Introduction to Jewish-Christian Relations - *Pastor Kerra English*
Israel State & Society - *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*
Jews & American Politics - *Mr. Aaron Levi*
Jews & The History of Messianism - *Rabbi Sandy Zisser*
Jewish-Muslim Relations & the Arab-Israeli Conflict - *Dr. Sariel Birnbaum*
Medieval Jewish History - *Dr. Dan Aviv*
Medieval Times - *Dr. Dan Aviv*
Modern Diaspora Jewish History - *Joey Leskin*

LANGUAGE
Biblical Aramaic - *Israel Institute of Biblical Studies*
Biblical Hebrew (Levels 3-8) - *Israel Institute of Biblical Studies*
Modern Hebrew (Levels 3-8) - *Israel Institute of Biblical Studies*
Yiddish Intensive - *YIVO Institute for Jewish Research*

MUSIC AND TEFILLAH
Jewish Music: History, Ritual & Memory - *Dr. Jeremiah Lockwood*
Learn to Layn Haftarah - *Ann Zisser*
Learn to Layn Torah - *Ann Zisser*

TEXT
Creating Modern Torah Commentaries - *Rabbi Patrick Beaulier*
Deep Dive Into Ketuvim - *Barnett Kaman*
Deep Dive Into Prophets - *Barnett Kaman*
Genesis Rabbah - *Rabbi Alison Brody*
The Magnificent Megillot - *Rabbi Dr. Eric Wasser*
Midrash - *Jonathan T. Reich*
Mishnah - *Rabbi Dr. Joshua Cahan*
Mussar - *Rabbi Dr. Eric Wasser*

ELECTIVE COURSES

TEXT (CONT.'D)

The Psalms: 30 Days of Activities - *Rabbi Zachary Jellson*
Rabbinic Prayer - *Rabbi Alison Brody*
The Talmud: A Methodological Introduction - *Northwestern University*
Tehillim - *Rabbi Alison Brody*
Transmission of Rabbinic Texts - *Rabbi Dr. Joshua Cahan*
Women In Torah - *Rabbi Sandy Zisser*
Yerushalmi - *Rabbi Dr. Joshua Cahan*

PRACTICAL RABBINICS

1:1 Spiritual Direction (6 or 12 sessions) - *Rabbi Menachem Cohen*
2SLGBTQIA+ I: Theoretical Overview - *Rabbi Nachshon Siritsky*
2SLGBTQIA+ II: Traditional Jewish Textual Sources on Gender and Sexuality - *Rabbi Nachshon Siritsky*
2SLGBTQIA+ III: Contemporary and Denominational Approaches to the 2SLGBTQIA+ Jewish Community - *Rabbi Nachshon Siritsky*
2SLGBTQIA+ IV: Pastoral Counseling 2SLGBTQIA+ Jews and Their Loved Ones - *Rabbi Nachshon Siritsky*
2SLGBTQIA+ V: Liturgical and Ritual Approaches for 2SLGBTQIA+ Jews and Their Loved Ones - *Rabbi Nachshon Siritsky*
2SLGBTQIA+ VI: 2SLGBTQIA+ Jewish Community Policies, Practices and More - *Rabbi Nachshon Siritsky*
Creating Inclusive Jewish Spaces - *Rabbi Arielle Shimko*
Curriculum Development - *Dr. Dan Aviv*
Death & Dying - *Rabbi Dr. Eric Wasser*
Godexperiments: DIY Spiritual Direction - *Rabbi Brian Zachary Mayer*
Grief Support Specialist Certificate - *University of Madison-Wisconsin*
Jewish Medical Ethics for Chaplains & Rabbis - *Rabbah Amanda Veazy Flaks*
Life Cycle Officiation Havrutah - *Rabbi Patrick Beaulier*
Mandated Reporter Training - *Independent Study*
Mental Health and the Rabbinate - *Rabbi Adam Fogel*
Mikvah, Kashrut & Nerot: Making Traditionally "Women's" Mitzvot Into Non-Gendered Rituals - *Rabbah Amanda Veazy Flaks*
Mindful Judaism: A Contemplative Approach to Jewish Practice - *Rabbi Adam Fogel*
Navigating the CPE Process with a Jewish Lens - *Rabbah Amanda Veazy Flaks*
Nonprofit Ready - *Nonprofit Ready*

ELECTIVE COURSES

PRACTICAL RABBINICS (CONT.'D)
Prepare-Enrich Certification - *Prepare-Enrich*
Practical Kabbalah - *Rabbi Ileanah Carazo*
Preparing for Pesach - *Rabbi Dr. Eric Wasser*
Psychological First Aid - *National Child Traumatic Stress Network*
Spirituality, Health & Healing - *University of North Carolina-Charlotte*
Teaching the Holocaust - *Yad VaShem*

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ACADEMIC COURSES (YEAR ONE)

Classical Hebrew I – Dr. Danny Mond
This course is designed to help students go beyond merely decoding traditional Jewish texts and to learn to read for meaning. Unlike Hebrew courses designed to develop facility with spoken-language Hebrew, this course is geared to taking traditional liturgical and biblical texts, and learning to break them down word-by-word: by prefixes, suffixes, into familiar root words and base words. The course will involve grammar drills and worksheets, practice in declension and conjugation, etc.

Jewish Ethical Dilemmas – Rabbi Jill Levy
This course is designed to provide a survey of Jewish history between Antiquity and early Medieval period, through studying how Rabbinic Judaism emerged to become the normative form of Judaism.

Jewish History I – Ariel Simon
This course is designed to provide a survey of Jewish history between Antiquity and early Medieval period, through studying how Rabbinic Judaism emerged to become the normative form of Judaism.

Jewish Liturgy I – Rabbi Dr. Joshua Cahan
This course will examine the character and composition of the Jewish prayer ritual, and how it can both facilitate and hinder deep Prayer Experience. We will look at elements of the conceptual framework for Jewish prayer; its history and development; select prayer texts; and the experiential.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ACADEMIC COURSES (YEAR ONE)

Jewish Theology – Rabbi Sandy Zisser
This course will trace how humanity created the concept of God, and how that God is the answer to all of our thoughts, wants, and ideas from science to religion. From the very young to the very old the idea and concept of God evolves and grows just like we do.

Pastoral Care I – Rabbi Fredda Cohen
During the semester, we will apply both theoretical and practical approaches to the discipline of pastoral care: to develop and deepen the understanding, comfort, experience and skill level of rabbinical students in offering pastoral care and counseling in various settings and contexts.

People of the Book – Dr. Danny Mond
The Jewish Bible is both cornerstone of the Jewish religion and crowning glory of the Jewish people. Whether seen as the direct product of the divine hand, divinely inspired text, or the result of centuries of multiple, very human, authors and editors, the Tanakh is the alpha and the omega.

Talmud 1 – Rabbi Eric Wasser
Together investigate how Talmudic literature uniquely functions simultaneously in the realms of law, interpretation, education, philosophy and theology.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ACADEMIC COURSES (YEAR TWO)

Classical Hebrew II – Hadassah Wrightman
This course will offer students an immersive journey through classical Hebrew. Throughout the course students will engage regularly with topics such as Israel, spirituality, politics, and history. This learning will help them develop their ability to explore these topics with everyone in a deep and meaningful way.

Derech Shir – Hadassah Wrightman
Welcome to the advanced Hebrew course "Hebrew Through Songs." While each lesson will be unique, there will be some common expectations throughout all the lessons. Prior to each lesson, you will be expected to listen to the song with and without looking at the words as well as answer several questions.

Homiletics – Rabbi Patrick Beaulier
Most Jews engage with Judaism through aggadah (narrative) more strongly than through halacha (law). How do we teach lofty spiritual ideas in 280 characters? How do we write authentically in the ChatGPT era? How do we promote authenticity in an environment that promotes likes, shares, subscribes, and SEO (search engine optimization)? And how do we do all this as religious identity and practice declines in the Western world?

Jewish History II – Rabbi Sandy Zisser
This course is designed to provide a survey of the development of the modern Jewish movements in the United States and hopefully shed light on the similarities that we all share.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ACADEMIC COURSES (YEAR TWO)

Jewish Liturgy II – Rabbi Dr. Joshua Cahan
This course will take a deeper dive into key Holiday Liturgy texts. We will try to discover coherence in texts that often feel disjointed; and we will see how they serve as extended meditations on how we are meant to approach and experience these sacred moments. We will first look in depth at the Haggadah and the Machzor, then explore several other holiday texts and rituals.

Modern Hebrew - Dr. Danny Mond
This class is a continuation of the Quarter 4 course Classical Hebrew (Beginner-Intermediate level).

Pastoral Care II – Rabbi Fredda Cohen
This course will focus on the utilization of psalms, meditation, midrash, and poetry in pastoral settings. It is intended to complement and expand the pastoral tools that we studied in Basic Pastoral Care which were more clinical in approach. This class will offer the opportunity to develop a pastoral care toolbox that includes the vast array of Jewish creative expressions throughout the millennia that can provide comfort, support, and meaning. The course will consist of nine online classes, assigned Hebrew and English readings to be read prior to class, and assignments intended to develop your own creativity. Assignments for each class must be completed prior to that class, without exception, unless in the case of a medical emergency. For much of the course, you will be working in chevruta.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ACADEMIC COURSES (YEAR TWO)

Practical Rabbinics – Rabbi Patrick Beaulier
The rabbinate demands a unique blend of academic knowledge, professional skills, personal wisdom, religious sensitivities, open mindedness, boundaries, friendship, mentorship and commitments that are wildly unrealistic for any human being. You have to be the pastor, the educator, the business person, the non-profit fundraiser, the center of the community (but don't get an ego about it!), the lifecycle officiant and more. We will use a lot of role playing, Harvard Business School style case studies and perhaps some special guests to help us learn our way through this mixed bag of lessons collectively known as Practical Rabbinics.

Talmud II – Rabbi Dr. Eric Wasser
As we saw in our first course, although Talmud is largely about law, it should not be confused with either code of law or with a commentary on the legal sections of the Torah. Rather the Talmud is an intergenerational text which offers insights into philosophy, ethics, prayer, theology, and logic. In this course, we will continue to cover relevant texts which can guide us in our leadership within the contemporary Jewish community.

Torah Interpretation through the Ages – Rabbi Jill Levy
Jews are known as "the people of the book". We are also a people of words, imagination, and boundless creativity. This class will examine three Biblical narratives in conjunction with classic commentaries, art, poetry, and contemporary thought to understand how textual interpretation has, at once, evolved and remained constant over time. We will discuss if questions, which lie at the heart of all commentary, are being asked or answered and why they matter.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

INNOVATION COURSES

Innovation I: Business Model Canvas - Rabbi Patrick Beaulier
In this course we'll begin innovating using the Business Model Canvas. An alternative to a linear business plan, this tool to help you visualize your idea as a series of moving units that can be optimized over time.You will show progress in this course by slowly putting together you business model canvas, a few elements at a time.

Innovation II: Jewish Innovation Unbound - Lex Rofeberg
Centered around conversations held on the Judaism Unbound podcast, Judaism Unbound has identified 10 specific episodes (out of over 200) that each represent a kind of "case study" in Jewish innovation. We will ask you to consider how these thinkers and practitioners of Jewish life can inform the work that you do, in your own communities.

Innovation III: Clergypreneur Series - Rabbi Patrick Beaulier
The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the tools you need to be clergy-entrepreneurs (aka 'clergypreneur'). This course is both big picture and laser focused, meaning you will learn the meta ideas that drive WHY you use these tools, as well as WHAT the tools are and HOW to use them.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

SYNAGOGUE ENGAGEMENT COURSES

Adult Jewish Education Independent Study I & II (Up To 1.5 Credits) - Rabbi Sandy Zisser
The vision of this Jewish Education Independent Study credit is to connect your academic learning with practical experience. Pluralistic Rabbinical Seminary believes that an internship is central to preparation for the rabbinate and that the best professional training includes a deep dive into the realities of congregational life. You will earn credit for demonstrating how your learning at PRS has influenced your work as an educator.

High Holidays Service Leadership I-III (Up To 2.5 Credits) - Rabbi Sandy Zisser
The vision of the High Holidays Service Leadership credit is to connect a student's academic learning with practical experience. Pluralistic Rabbinical Seminary believes that an internship is central to preparation for the rabbinate and that the best professional training includes a deep dive into the realities of congregational life. Students will receive credit for leading a full Rosh Hashanah and/or a full Yom Kippur service.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

SYNAGOGUE ENGAGEMENT COURSES

Children's Jewish Education Independent Study I & II (Up To 1.5 Credits) - Rabbi Sandy Zisser
The vision of this Jewish Education Independent Study credit is to connect your academic learning with practical experience. Pluralistic Rabbinical Seminary believes that an internship is central to preparation for the rabbinate and that the best professional training includes a deep dive into the realities of congregational life. You will earn credit for demonstrating how your learning at PRS has influenced your work as an educator.

Shabbat Service Leadership I & II (Up To 2 Credits) - Rabbi Sandy Zisser
The vision of the Shabbat Service Leadership credit is to connect a student's academic learning with practical experience. Pluralistic Rabbinical Seminary believes that an internship is central to preparation for the rabbinate and that the best professional training includes a deep dive into the realities of congregational life, both its strengths and its weaknesses.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (JEWISH THOUGHT)

Courses are one credit unless otherwise noted.

Introduction to Jewish Mysticism - Rabbi Matthew Ponak
In each unit of this course, we explore a different aspect of Jewish mysticism. The weekly topics each stand on their own, but are ordered intentionally as an expression of how an individual's spiritual journey might unfold. Class lectures are supplemented with mystical texts and commentaries from Torah for the New Age by Rabbi Matt Ponak, as well as academic sources, and guides for practices where relevant.

Judaism, Jewish Community & Race (.5) - Yitz Jordan, Abbie Yamamoto, Shawn Harris, Cristina Domínguez Ramírez & Eli Forman
This is a short survey on the intersection of Judaism, Jewish community, race, class and more, as told through the lives of individual Jews of Color (JOC). No course can ever fully speak to the experiences of JOC. No course can ever fully cover the academic ground on race in America. Our hope at PRS is to give a space for JOC to voice their thoughts on difficult issues, and to learn that questions of diversity and inclusion are more complicated than anyone can imagine.

Kabbalah 101 (2) - Rabbi Ileanah Carazo
Students will learn the foundations, tools, and applications of Kabbalah.

Kabbalah 102 (2) - Rabbi Ileanah Carazo
Prerequisite: Kabbalah 101
Students will learn advanced tools and practical uses of Kabbalah.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (JEWISH THOUGHT)

LGBTQ+ Jewish Thinking (.5) - Rabbi Nadia Siritsky
This course aims to provide an overview of LGBTQ Jewish thinking to prepare pluralistic rabbinical students to understand both traditional and progressive approaches to working with LGBTQ Jews, and to begin to formulate their own theology and rabbinical approach. We will discuss Torah and rabbinic sources, along with contemporary queer theory, before addressing perspectives of current Jewish scholars, rabbis and organizations. An overview of pastoral dynamics and ritual considerations will also be explored, in order to prepare students to identify their own rabbinic approach and perspective.

Navigating Israel Issues in the Diaspora - Michael Morgenthau
This nine-unit course includes pre-recorded video lessons, reading materials, and quizzes.

The Problem of Evil & Theodicy - Rabbi Patrick Beaulier
Prerequisite: 1 Academic pastoral care and 1 Academic theology course
Here we'll explore the Problem of Evil, answers given in response to suffering, and build a theological tool kit for working with those in pain. One unique feature of this course is that we will be reviewing theodicy through the sources. In some cases, the individual solutions to the problem of evil will show up in multiple places in the course, but this will stand to show that no thinking on human suffering lives in a vacuum, and that there is always more to add to the question.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (JEWISH THOUGHT)

UnYeshiva (1-3) - Judaism Unbound
We are excited to be partnering with Judaism Unbound to offer elective credit towards smicha when you take a course through their UnYeshiva platform. Visit the Judaism Unbound website to view current course offerings: www.judaismunbound.com/classes. Courses are held live in a virtual classroom weekly for 8 sessions.

ELECTIVES (HISTORY)

Courses are one credit unless otherwise noted.

Antisemitism: From Its Origins to the Present (.5) - Coursera/Yad Vashem
In this course, 50 leading scholars from all over the world will explore questions and issues relating to antisemitism including: what is antisemitism? How has it changed throughout history? Why can it be found among so many diverse cultures, and even among opposing ideologies? What happened to antisemitism after the Holocaust? How is antisemitism expressed today, and what are the main spheres in which it can be found?

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (HISTORY)

Chosen Issues in Holocaust History (.5) - Coursera/Yad Vashem
The Holocaust – what do we know about it and what more can we learn? This course provides a broad and in-depth look at central topics relating to the history of the Holocaust. It examines the events and processes that took place during these earth-shattering years through new and thought-provoking perspectives.

The Conflict in 4 Acts (.5) - Dr. Dan Aviv
Talking about Israel-Palestine is as essential as it is maddening. Much of what passes for discussion is often bereft of context and meaning – and soon ends up in shouting. In four 90-minute sessions, I hope to provide some context and meaning and return a little sanity to the conversation.

Conversion To Judaism: History & Today (.5) - Rabbi Patrick Beaulier
By the end of this three-part course, rabbinical students will have a comprehensive understanding of the history, theology, and practical aspects of conversion to Judaism. They will be well-equipped to guide and support prospective converts on their spiritual journey, while adhering to the relevant halachic principles and ethical considerations.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (HISTORY)

The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem (.5) - Coursera/Tel Aviv University
The destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem and the Babylonian Exile were a great catastrophe in the history of the Jewish Nation. What really happened during that dark, fateful age, and how did new opportunities arise from the ashes? This course is provided through Coursera and Tel Aviv University. Students will take the course and submit the Coursera certificate to validate the satisfactory completion of the course.

Introduction to Jewish-Christian Relations - Pastor Kerra English
In this course, we will discuss the history and themes of Jewish-Christian relations. From the New Testament and biblical interpretation to the writings of rabbis and church fathers, though the past to the modern day and more. Our core text will be An Introduction to Jewish-Christian Relations by Dr. Edward Kessler, which Presbyterian Pastor English will team teach with Rabbi Patrick Beaulier.

Israel State and Society - Coursera/Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Israel is a country that draws a lot of public attention around the globe. Nevertheless, both those who support Israel and those who are critical of its geopolitical standing and policies, usually have a very limited knowledge about the Israeli society and its political system. This course presents Israel from multiple perspectives – political, social, economic and cultural – in an attempt to expose the learners to a cutting edge academic research on the country.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (HISTORY)

Jews and American Politics (.5) - Aaron Levi
Jews and American Politics: how have Jews balanced the Jewish and American identities in the brutal arena of American politics? In this course, learn about some of the most influential and controversial Jewish figures from the ages.

Jews & The History of Messianism (.5) - Rabbi Sandy Zisser
This course explores the fascination of the Jews about the coming of the messiah and the heralding in of the messianic age. We will explore several different false messiahs and what made the people of each time period yearn for the messiah.

Jewish-Muslim Relations & the Arab-Israeli Conflict (.5) - Dr. Sariel Birnbaum
The course will survey the relations between Islam and the Jews from the moment that Prophet Muhammad established that great religion. We will then learn about the Arab-Israeli conflict's evolution from the establishment of Zionism at the twilight of the Ottoman Empire and the turbulent times of the British Mandate. The unsolved Palestinian situation returned again and again to the headlines with terror incidents and usually unfruitful rounds of peace negotiation.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (HISTORY)

Medieval Jewish History (.5) - Dr. Dan Aviv
This course helps students understand Medieval Jewish History and aims to answer the following questions: Who decided? How did the majority interact with the minorities and How do you do Jew?

Medieval Times - Dr. Dan Aviv
Did you ever wonder how Judaism got to where it is today? This course will examine the bridge between ancient Judaism and how we "Jew" in the 21st century. We'll explore how many of our trends and ideas got their start and transformed over the centuries as well as across the Middle East and Europe.

Modern Diaspora Jewish History - (.5) - Joey Leskin
In this elective, we will take a journey through modern Diaspora history across the world as we seek to understand where we came from, where we are today, and where we may be going as a Jewish people.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (LANGUAGE)

Courses are one credit unless otherwise noted.

Biblical Aramaic - Israel Institute of Biblical Studies
During this course, students will learn Biblical Aramaic while studying ancient scriptures from the books of Daniel and Ezra, gaining a basic vocabulary and understanding of the ancient language.

Biblical Hebrew (Up To 6 Credits) - Israel Institute of Biblical Studies
Students may take any Level 3-8 Biblical Hebrew course from the Israel Institute of Biblical Studies for one credit each.

Modern Hebrew (Up To 6 Credits) - Israel Institute of Biblical Studies
Students may take any Level 3-8 Modern Hebrew course from the Israel Institute of Biblical Studies for one credit each.

Yiddish Intensive (.5) - YIVO Institute of Jewish Research
Explore the Yiddish language in your choice of three experience levels: beginner, advanced and intermediate. Students may only take one level for a half credit.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (MUSIC & TEFILLAH)

Courses are one credit unless otherwise noted.

Jewish Music: History, Ritual & Memory - Dr. Jeremiah Lockwood
What is the role of music in framing sacred experience? How do the experiences of music and sound shape our sense of community, self and history as Jews and as people living in our multiple worlds of daily life? What does a Jew sound like?

Learn to Layn Haftarah (2) - Ann Zisser
This course introduces students to (or strengthens students') skills in the cantillation (trope) system used to chant Haftarah. We will explore the trope markings and their names, the trope family system, and the trope melodies. We will learn how to apply these markings to chanting Haftarah readings.

Learn to Layn Torah (2) - Ann Zisser
This course introduces students to (or strengthens students') skills in the cantillation (trope) system used to chant Torah. We will explore the trope markings and their names, the trope family system, and the trope melodies. We will learn how to apply these markings to chanting Torah readings.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (TEXT)

Courses are one credit unless otherwise noted.

Creating Modern Torah Commentaries (.5) - Rabbi Patrick Beaulier
In this course, you will go inside the somewhat Pop Art or Punk methodology Rabbi Patrick uses to craft the classes and sermons he gives in his synagogue. We will begin by understanding how people have tried to comment on the Torah, and how you may find yourself commenting on the Torah.

Deep Dive into Ketuvim - Barnett Kaman
Welcome to a 12 unit series on the third section of the Tanakh, the Hebrew Bible. Ketuvim, the Writings, is comprised of various genres; poetry, wisdom, philosophy, and history.

Deep Dive into Prophets - Barnett Kaman
Welcome to a 12 unit course on the Prophets, Nevi'im, the second section of the Tanakh, the Hebrew Bible. Each lecture on average runs about 20 minutes, and there are quizzes for each unit.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (TEXT)

Genesis Rabbah (.5) - Rabbi Alison Brody
Genesis Rabbah does not begin the way we expect (with a passage from Genesis) but instead opens with a passage from Proverbs. Why and how does this early midrash continually use passages from books of the Tanach other than Genesis? How and when can we use this style of midrash – called 'petihah' – in our own teachings and interpretations, so that this early Rabbinic style of commentary can come alive in our contemporary words?

The Magnificent Megillot (.5) - Rabbi Dr. Eric Wasser
This five-unit course is designed to offer students an overview of the content, structure, and characters in each of the Megilloth that we read during the year. What is the connection between each Megillah and its corresponding holiday? Are the stories real? What does the Midrash have to add to the traditional text? What is this literary genre's ultimate purpose?
Explore these and other questions through our video presentations and interactive worksheets.

Midrash (.5) - Jonathan T. Reich
This six-unit course is on Midrash as a literary genre and consists of six units. Each unit includes a prerecorded lecture as well as a handout. Through this course students will learn the background, history, theory and architecture of Midrash and Midrash in reading before studying and interpreting Midrash texts.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (TEXT)

Mishnah (.5) - Rabbi Dr. Joshua Cahan
The course covers the things you need to know in order to study Mishna deeply and to understand its place in the canon of Rabbinic Literature and the development of Jewish practice. We look at key features of the legal corpus as a whole and the typical styles and forms it uses to teach individual laws. We will also summarize scholarly insights into how and why it took shape when it did and how it came to shape all subsequent rabbinic discourse.

Mussar - Rabbi Dr. Eric Wasser
This course is designed to introduce students to selected concepts surrounding the world of Mussar. Mussar is a traditional Jewish path of spiritual development that leads to awareness, wisdom, and transformation. It is a treasury of teachings and practices that help individuals understand their true nature as holy souls, then to break through the barriers that surround and obstruct the flow of inner holiness or light.

The Psalms: 30 Days of Activities - Rabbi Zachary Jellson
Students will have the opportunity to take a deeper dive into the Psalms. This course is designed to look at a few psalms and explore different ways to engage with them. Some are journaling activities, others are embodied practices. Over the 30 days, you will establish different ways that you can feel connected to the text and learn skills that can apply to other areas as well.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (TEXT)

Rabbinic Prayer - Rabbi Alison Brody
The Rabbinic understanding of prayer reflects the Rabbinic understanding of time – time, for the rabbis of the Talmud, was rooted in the seasons, the rising and setting of the sun, the activities of daily life, and priestly worship in the Jerusalem Temple. This Havrutah invites us to experience this early sense of time and prayer using texts from the Talmud.

The Talmud (.5) - Coursera/Northwestern University
The Talmud is one of the richest and most complicated works of literature the world has ever known. Since being composed around 1500 years ago it has inspired not only religious reverence but significant intellectual engagement. In this course learners will be introduced to the unique characteristics of this text and the challenges that inhere in studying it while studying a chapter of the Talmud. Students of the course can expect to develop an appreciation for how the Talmud works and why it continues to inspire religious and intellectual devotion. They will be challenged to employ critical reading skills and to analyze legal and historical concepts.

Tehillim (.5) - Rabbi Alison Brody
The Psalms are an ancient and enduring part of Jewish life, integrated into our worship, celebrations, and days of mourning. Yet the texts can be challenging – they are sometimes judgmental, other times vengeful. This Havrutah explores the Psalms as 'Pivot Prayers' that connects our ancient to contemporary worship, pivoting among our emotions and across time.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (TEXT)

Transmission of Rabbinic Texts (.5) - Rabbi Dr. Joshua Cahan
This course traces the paths through which the key books of the rabbinic canon were transmitted from the time and place of composition up to the era of Hebrew printing. It chronicles the many obstacles they had to overcome, the effect of historical and political shifts, and how those journeys affected the ways they were used and understood by later generations. By following this theme across a range of compositions, we will identify common patterns and find some truly surprising divergences.

Women In Torah (.5) - Rabbi Sandy Zisser
Women in Torah examines many of the female characters in the Torah using just the actual text not commentary, midrash, and haggadah. The purpose is to see what the text says or in many cases, doesn't say about the women in the Torah.

Yerushalmi (.5) - Rabbi Dr. Joshua Cahan
This course gives an overview of the history and structure of the Talmud Yerushalmi or Palestinian Talmud. We will look at some key features of the text itself – both why it is so crucial and why it can be so daunting – and its relationship to the rest of the rabbinic canon, especially the Babylonian Talmud. Then we will trace the amazing story of the Yerushalmi's transmission, from its creation in 4th century Israel to its rediscovery in 10th century North Africa to the dawn of Hebrew printing in 15th century Italy.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (PRACTICAL RABBINICS)

Courses are one credit unless otherwise noted.

1:1 Spiritual Direction (.5 or 1) - Rabbi Menachem Cohen
As clergy, people regularly come to us with spiritual and existential questions. They want to know why they're here, how to manifest their callings, or simply for a deeper relationship with the Infinite Eternal. To best accompany them on these journeys it helps for us to have our spiritual lives somewhat in order. Or at least to be asking questions regularly. This elective is one-on-one spiritual direction sessions, a place for you to explore, question, doubt, grow, find spiritual comfort, and otherwise work on your spiritual formation so that you are better prepared to accompany others on their journeys.

2SLGBTQIA+ I: Theoretical Overview - Rabbi Nachshon Siritsky
This course will cover introductions to 2SLGBTQIA+ terminology and Queer Theory; understanding intersectionality, and the difference between gender and sexuality; theoretical approaches to identity development; political and external influences; rabbinic implications; and theoretical framework for "queer-affirming" spiritual care.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (PRACTICAL RABBINICS)

2SLGBTQIA+ II: Traditional Jewish Textual Sources on Gender and Sexuality - Rabbi Nachshon Siritsky
This course aims to provide a comprehensive overview of Jewish thinking regarding the traditional Jewish texts on gender and sexuality. We will discuss Torah and traditional rabbinic sources on these issues, with a focus on how these apply to 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals. This class will provide a broad overview of the major issues and dynamics in traditional texts on this issue, as well begin to prepare students for how to consider speaking about these in a current context.

2SLGBTQIA+ III: Contemporary and Denominational Approaches to the 2SLGBTQIA+ Jewish Community - Rabbi Nachshon Siritsky
This 15-hour course will provide students with an overview of contemporary and denominational approaches to the 2SLGBTQIA+ Jewish community. It will enable pluralistic seminary students to understand the range of ways that they can serve this special population and create affirming Jewish communities.

2SLGBTQIA+ IV: Pastoral Counseling 2SLGBTQIA+ Jews and Their Loved Ones - Rabbi Nachshon Siritsky
This course will give students an overview of clinical and theoretical considerations on 2SLGBTQIA+ identity formation and sexual orientation development that can guide their rabbinic and pastoral counseling. An overview of adverse religious experiences, religious trauma, SOGIECE (sexual orientation and gender identity and expression change efforts) practices, and conversion “therapy” will be provided. Students will begin to consider how these learnings will inform their rabbinate.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (PRACTICAL RABBINICS)

2SLGBTQIA+ V: Liturgical and Ritual Approaches for 2SLGBTQIA+ Jews and Their Loved Ones - Rabbi Nachshon Siritsky
This 5-hour course will provide students with an overview of diverse rabbinic and pastoral approaches to liturgy and ritual, as well as explore ways that they can queer Jewish texts, using art, and midrash for worship and lifecycle purposes.

2SLGBTQIA+ VI: 2SLGBTQIA+ Jewish Community Policies, Practices and More - Rabbi Nachshon Siritsky
This 5-hour course on 2SLGBTQIA+ Jewish community policies and practices is the last of the pre-recorded curriculum series and will provide students with an overview of the opportunities for them to create safe(r) and more inclusive Jewish communities, as well as some of the practice considerations that they must consider as they prepare for their rabbinates and begin to develop their field seminar project for their final course of the curriculum.

Creating Inclusive Jewish Spaces (.5) - Rabbi Arielle Shimko
In this course, Creating Inclusive Jewish spaces, we will explore ways to engage every member of the Jewish community through unique programming whether it be for a holiday, Shabbat or community gathering, virtual or not and cater to Jews of all different backgrounds. We will explore Jewish texts and learn to incorporate them into our teachings of am yisrael. We will watch clips of how Jews are using their Judaism in many different ways of expressing themselves. We will explore the concept of otherness and what it may feel like to feel out of place in the Jewish community, and how to think of ways to accept and look out for the other.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (PRACTICAL RABBINICS)

Curriculum Development (.5) - Dr. Dan Aviv
As humans in the world, we are learning all the time. Schools, however, conceive of learning differently. Curriculum, from the Latin word for “racing chariot,” denotes a set course to follow on the way to knowledge. In the process, we will inspect the toolkit for curriculum development: maps, “enduring understandings,” “essential questions” and assessment - and use them to formulate some “racing chariots” of our own.

Death & Dying - Rabbi Dr. Eric Wasser
Students will gain knowledge in the following areas: Viddui, Keriya, Afterlife and Resurrection, Services and Eulogies, Suicide, Kaddish and Eil Maleh, End of Life Issues, Dedications, Aveilut and Mourning Practices.

Godsperiments: DIY Spiritual Direction - Rabbi Brian Mayer
Designed for spiritual directors looking for new techniques, the course includes twenty-six rational, thought-clarifying experiments, 100+ page PDF and easy to access videos and guidance by Religion-Outside-The-Box's founder and director, Rabbi Brian Mayer.

Grief Support Specialist Certificate - University of Madison-Wisconsin
Acquire knowledge and skills to enhance or create a professional specialty that focuses on counseling people who have suffered a major loss as the result of death, divorce, unemployment, destruction due to drug abuse, or other traumatic personal devastation.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (PRACTICAL RABBINICS)

Jewish Medical Ethics for Chaplains and Rabbis - Rabbah Amanda Veazy Flaks
As pastoral care providers, rabbis are frequently asked questions regarding medical ethics. In this course, the havruta will discuss some of the most frequent questions asked of rabbis, chaplains and other care providers and how halacha responds from a pluralistic viewpoint.

Life Cycle Officiation Havrutah - Rabbi Patrick Beaulier
In this course, you will learn the very technical aspects of Jewish lifecycle officiation. We will be taking a very egalitarian, Reconstructionist style approach in this course, by assuming that the use of certain rituals in a lifecycle are a matter of choice, and that this choice is not simply aesthetic, or a matter of convenience, but intentional. Traditional Judaism has a vote, and a powerful one at that, but not a veto. However, it's important for you to know what you are reforming before you Reform it, hence teaching you everything.

Mandated Reporter Training - Independent Study
The Mandated Reporter certificate is designed to help early childhood and school-age professionals (which includes rabbis working with children) to understand their responsibilities as mandated reporters. Mandated Reporters are individuals who must report any suspicion of child maltreatment. Check with your locality for information on receiving your mandated reporter training and credit.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (PRACTICAL RABBINICS)

Mental Health and the Rabbinate - Rabbi Adam Fogel
This course is designed to provide you with an overview of common mental health issues, approaches to psychotherapy and mental health treatment, the ways in which clergy can respond appropriately on behalf of those served, and a framework for applying a psychospiritual framework to your rabbinate.

Mikvah, Kashrut and Nerot: Making Traditionally "Women's" Mitzvot into Non-Gendered Rituals - Rabbah Amanda Veazy Flaks
In this course, the student and teacher will work in havruta to explore the three traditionally "female" mitzvot- their origins, evolution of observance throughout history and practical halacha- and how to shift these mitzvot into non-gendered observance that's meaningful for all Jews.

Mindful Judaism: A Contemplative Approach to Jewish Practice - Rabbi Adam Fogel
This course is designed to help you develop and nourish a personal and meaningful relationship with yourself, others, and the Sacred or Divine. Mindfulness is the practice of noticing and experiencing the Sacred, Ineffable, or Divine in all places and experience, no matter how strange, unexpected, or unwelcome.

Navigating the CPE Process with a Jewish Lens - Rabbah Amanda Veazy Flaks
In this havruta, educator and student will explore issues related to the stresses of the CPE process and the challenges faced by Jewish chaplains in interfaith spaces.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (PRACTICAL RABBINICS)

Nonprofit Ready: Six Essentials of Nonprofit Management - Rabbi Patrick Beaulier
Learn the essentials of working in the nonprofit sector while earning free certificates from our friends at NonprofitReady.

Prepare-Enrich Certification - Prepare-Enrich
The mission of Prepare Enrich is to equip marriage champions, couples, and families with evidence-based skills and insights to foster healthy relationships. Becoming a certified Prepare/Enrich Facilitator provides you with the core knowledge and skills to confidently utilize Prepare/Enrich's proven assessment and feedback resources to foster resilient relationships and marriages.

Practical Kabbalah (2) - Rabbi Ileanah Carazo
A personal journey of self discovery and growth, throughout stories, meditations and weekly practices. This is a very transformational course, with a profound impact in the student's life.

Preparing for Pesach (2) - Rabbi Dr. Eric Wasser
Prerequisite: Biblical Hebrew I and II or equivalent.
This course introduces students to the numerous laws and customs of Pesach as described in Mishna Pesachim. The participant will come away with a foundational and practical knowledge of bedika, biur, bitul, the Mishnaic seder, and how those interpretations are applied in a practical manner during Nisan.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ELECTIVES (PRACTICAL RABBINICS)

Psychological First Aid - National Child Traumatic Stress Network
Psychological First Aid (PFA) is an evidence-informed modular approach to help children, adolescents, adults, and families in the immediate aftermath of disaster and terrorism. Individuals affected by a disaster or traumatic incident, whether survivors, witnesses, or responders to such events, may struggle with or face new challenges following the event.

Spirituality, Health and Healing - University of North Carolina-Charlotte
Spirituality, religion, and culture play an important role in health and healing. Health care systems and health care professionals must recognize and understand a variety of spiritual and religious values, beliefs, and practices and their impact on health and healing. UNC Charlotte provides this course through its partner Ed2Go.

Teaching the Holocaust (.5) - FutureLearn/Yad Vashem
Explore history, delve into pedagogical challenges revealed by research, and find practical solutions for teaching the Holocaust. During this course you will enrich your understanding of the history of the Holocaust, hearing from scholars at Yad Vashem, whilst experts from University College London will share their research into teaching and learning about the Holocaust.

MEET OUR INSTRUCTORS

"Make for yourself a teacher and acquire for yourself a friend..." Pirkei Avot

Rabbi Sandy Zisser is the Director and Founder of the Pluralistic Rabbinical Seminary. Additionally, he serves as the Director of Education at Temple Shaaray Tefila in Westchester County, NY. Rabbi Sandy received his smicha from the Jewish Spiritual Leaders Institute, his Master of Arts in Special Education from Bank Street College, and his Bachelor of Arts in American History and Strategic Studies from the State University of New York at Albany.

Rabbi Patrick Beaulier is the Executive Director and President of the Board for PunkTorah, the parent organization of Darshan Yeshiva and Pluralistic Rabbinical Seminary. For his role at Pluralistic Rabbinical Seminary, “Rabbi Patrick” is Director of Innovation, focusing on helping students prepare for their rabbinic careers. Rabbi Patrick is also the co-spiritual leader of Kehillah, a pop-up Jewish community in Richmond, VA. Rabbi Patrick received his smicha from Rabbinical Seminary International and his Bachelor of Science with a focus on Business Administration from the City University of Seattle. Rabbi Patrick developed the Innovation & Synagogue Engagement Program in 2020 and is now the educator for Homiletics and Practical Rabbinics.

Rabbi Dr. Joshua Cahan is a writer and Tefilah Coach from Riverdale, NY, and author of *The Yedid Nefesh Bencher* and *The Yedid Nefesh Haggadah*. He spent eleven years teaching Rabbinics and Prayer at The Leffell School (formerly Schechter Westchester). He received his rabbinic ordination and a Ph.D. in Rabbinic Literature from the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, where he also served as Director of the JTS Beit Midrash, and spent eight years directing the Northwoods Kollel and Beit Midrash Program at Camp Ramah in Wisconsin. Rabbi Cahan’s expertise in liturgy and prayer spans the academic and the practical—he is an accomplished baal tefilla (prayer leader) and song leader, and has, in addition to the Yedid Nefesh series, published several academic articles on liturgy.

Rabbi Fredda Cohen, MA, JD, BCC, is the Director of Pastoral Care and Education at White Plains Hospital in White Plains, New York. She has lectured extensively in the fields of pastoral education, bikur cholim, palliative care and spirituality. Rabbi Cohen was ordained as a rabbi by the Jewish Theological Seminary in 2010, where she also earned an MA in Judaic Studies. She is a board certified chaplain under the auspices of Neshama: Association of Jewish Chaplains (NAJC), and currently serves on its board. Rabbi Cohen received the prestigious Chaplain of the Year Award conferred by the New York Board of Rabbi in 2015. Prior to her career as a chaplain/rabbi, she worked as a trusts and estate attorney.

Hadassah Wrightman is a certified teacher, originally from Israel, working at the Leffell School for the past thirty-two years. Hadassah has taught Hebrew and Judaic Studies to all grade levels and for the past decade has served as department chair for Hebrew and Judaic Studies. She is currently at the lower school where, in addition to some teaching, Hadassah works directly with teachers to improve instruction and learning in these areas. Hadassah is proud to be a “student centered” teacher always focusing on the learning needs of her students first and constantly seeking new ways to engage with her students and improve their learning.

Dr. Daniel Mond is a lecturer and teacher in Jewish studies and in film, and has taught and lectured on 4 continents, in 5 countries. He has a Master of Hebrew and Jewish Studies with Distinction from the University of London, a Master of Education from OISE in Toronto, both a First Class Honours degree and a Diploma of Education from Monash University in Australia, and he read for a Doctorate in Philosophy, at King's College, Cambridge. Daniel also was a recipient of the prestigious Jerusalem Fellowship from 1989-1991; where he specialized in media for Jewish education. He came to the US from Israel to do a Master of Fine Arts in Film at Columbia University, and has lectured in film at both NYU and Baruch College and was a film reviewer for the Ma’ariv newspaper in Israel. Daniel currently teaches Tanakh in New York.

Ariel Simon teaches high school students at the Solomon Schechter School of Westchester. His courses focus on Jewish History, Tefilah, and Torah. He has also taught Jewish History classes for students of all ages and backgrounds in synagogues throughout the New York area. Ariel earned undergraduate degrees in Ancient Studies from Columbia University and in Talmud and Rabbinics from the Jewish Theological Seminary. He then spent two years studying Talmud at the Conservative Yeshiva, in Jerusalem. Afterwards, he enrolled at New York University's Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies where he earned a master's degree studying the Dead Sea Scrolls and Second Temple Judaism.

R**abbi Dr. Eric Wasser** is originally from Canada and is an avid Toronto Maple Leafs fan. He has worked in the pulpit and Jewish education for over thirty years. His academic background includes investiture as Hazzan from the Jewish Theological Seminary, certification as Mohel from the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, ordination as Rabbi from Mesivta Wolkowilsk and he additionally holds a doctorate in Jewish Education from the William Davidson Graduate School of Education. He has served pulpits in Chicago and on the East Coast. He presently teaches high school Rabbinics at the Leffell School in Hartsdale, New York, and serves as Rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel of the Palisades in Fort Lee, New Jersey.

Dr. Dan Aviv has been engaged with Jewish learning for almost 30 years as an educator, innovator, professor, published scholar and author. He has three kids, two books, and one podcast - and serves as Lead Educator and Design at ADRABA, a Jewish blended-learning high school in Toronto, Ontario.

Rabbi Jill Levy is the Director of Ramah DC Day Camp, which is part of the Camp Ramah New England family. Rabbi Jill joined CRNE after five years as Rabbi at the Evelyn Rubenstein JCC in Houston, where she oversaw Jewish learning and engagement as well as taught numerous adult education classes. Prior to her position at the Houston JCC, Rabbi Jill was Director of Congregational Learning at Herzl-Ner Tamid in Mercer Island, WA. Rabbi Jill received her ordination from the Jewish Theological Seminary in 2011. While in rabbinical school, she was a Wexner Graduate Fellow and served as student rabbi in several different congregations. In addition, she completed a summer of clinical pastoral education at St. Luke's and Texas Children's Hospitals in Houston. Rabbi Jill also earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Washington and a Master of Public Administration from Columbia University. She currently lives in Silver Spring with her husband, Matt, and two daughters (and eager campers), Nava and Miri. In her free time, you can find her running or bike riding on one of the many trails in the D.C. area.

Barnett Kamen is a teacher of the Hebrew Bible, Jewish Studies, Philosophy and Literature. He received a BA in Hebraic Studies at Rutgers University, having spent his sophomore year at the the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He received an MA in Jewish Studies with a specialty in Jewish History from the Baltimore Hebrew College, and was a PhD candidate in Biblical Literature at Dropsie University. Mr. Kamen has been involved in Jewish education for almost 50 years, having taught Hebrew school, high school, and adult education.

Pastor Kerra English is an ordained pastor in the Presbyterian Church USA, with a Master of Divinity from Union Presbyterian Seminary and more than 20 years pastoring Presbyterian Congregations. She is also a trained spiritual director through the RUAH School of Spiritual Direction at Richmond Hill. Pastor English currently serves as pastor for Ashland Presbyterian Church in Ashland, VA.

Rabbi Menachem Cohen is a spiritual director, rabbi, and tabletop roleplaying game designer (like Dungeons & Dragons). His 2 areas of focus are the design and use of roleplaying games for spiritual direction and working with seminary/divinity students and new clergy from all traditions. He was ordained at Hebrew Seminary in Skokie, IL in 2003 and received his Graduate Certificate in Spiritual Direction at Loyola University in 2019. He has played roleplaying games since 1979. You can find more information about him and his work in this Wired article, https://www.wired.com/story/roleplaying-rabbi-community-building/, and on his website, http://whatmakesyoucomealive.net.

Dr. Jeremiah Lockwood began a music career with over a decade of apprenticeship to the legendary Piedmont Blues musician Carolina Slim, playing in the subways of New York City. He also trained under his grandfather Cantor Jacob Konigsberg and performed in his choir. Dr. Lockwood's band The Sway Machinery seeks inspiration from diverse realms of experience related to the cultural geography of New York City. The Sway Machinery has played around the world, including stints at legendary music festivals like Montreal Jazz, Roskilde, and perhaps most notably, Festival au Desert in Timbuktu, Mali. In addition to leading The Sway Machinery, Dr. Lockwood toured for years as guitarist in the popular world-beat band Balkan Beat Box and has scored numerous film and video projects. He was a recipient of the 2007-8 Six Points Fellowship for Emerging Jewish Artists, was 2010 Artist-in-Residence for the Forward and was a 2011 Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra Composer Fellow. He completed a Ph.D. in Education and Jewish Studies at Stanford University in 2020.

Dr. Sariel Birnbaum received his PhD. in Contemporary Middle Eastern Studies from Hebrew University. He has written and published a book, “Back to the Past – Filmed history in Arab Cinema,” through Magnes Press, Hebrew University, and published additional academic articles. Dr. Birnbaum teaches at UCLA, and previously taught at Binghamton SUNY and San-Diego State University. In addition to Hebrew, his mother language, Dr. Birnbaum worked as a translator from Arabic, and he reads and speaks French and German.

Aaron Levi is an experiential Jewish educator, curriculum developer, and the founder and CEO of Gate City Tours, LLC, which offers hyper-local, neighborhood-based walking tours exploring the history and evolution of Atlanta and its Jewish community. Aaron holds dual Master's Degrees in Education and Judaic Studies from New York University, where he was a Jim Joseph Fellow. He is a graduate of the Yeshiva University Certificate Program in Experiential Jewish Education; the iCenter Master's Concentration in Israel Education; and the American Jewish World Service Rabbinic and Graduate Student Global Justice Fellowship. Aaron received his bachelor's degree in Journalism, Judaic Studies, and Hebrew from New York University's Gallatin School of Individualized Study.

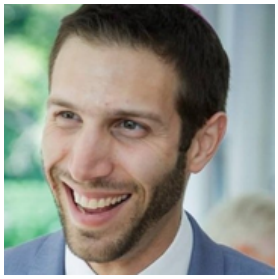
Rabbi Arielle Shimko comes to the rabbinate with a background in Jewish education and teaching. She has taught Hebrew language in elementary and pre-school and then decided to attend rabbinical school. Rabbi Arielle served as the Rabbinic Intern to Temple Emanu-El in Miami Beach for five years and loved every part of the rabbinate, from officiating at wedding ceremonies, Bnei mitzvah, funerals, teaching Hebrew school, mentoring conversion students, teaching Hebrew, running synagogue programs for young professionals and young families and so much more.

Joey Leskin, of Yemeni-Jewish origin, is a leadership consultant, Jewish educator and coach from London. He has over a decade of experience designing and facilitating leadership and Jewish learning programs for audiences across the globe. He specialises in communication skills training and innovative approaches to community building, having had experience working with mission driven organisations, foundations and Jewish communities in over 50 countries. Notable collaborators include Schusterman Family Philanthropies, the JDC and Limmud. In the Jewish education space, he teaches the Jewish Diversity module for Westminster Synagogue's conversion class, produced a report on Jewish Innovation in the Diaspora for the Templeton Foundation, and sits on the Board of the UK Movement for Reform Judaism. He holds a master's degree in international relations and certifications in coaching and non-profit management.

Rabbi Ileanah Carazo was ordained at the Jewish Spiritual Leadership Institute and is a conversion mentor at Darshan Yeshiva. She has been blessed with the possibility of studying directly with many great sages of our times, from different traditions and perspectives, giving her a wide understanding of the many beautiful colors and manifestations of Judaism. Travel is one of her passions and it has taken her around the globe, allowing her to appreciate sparks of the divinity in each human being and the treasured cultures that make our world. Her approach to teaching Judaism is holistic, integrating intellectual knowledge, experiential immersion, and spiritual transformation.

Jonathan T. Reich was born and raised in the Gateway City. He earned his MTS at Harvard Divinity School and was a visiting scholar at Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He has experience teaching both graduate and undergraduate level courses, including Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, Jewish texts and Religious Studies. In addition, he has designed adult education courses and worked in one-on-one mentoring in the Jewish community. Currently, he is an instructor at Darshan Yeshiva and lives in Somerville, MA with his wife Stefanie and daughter Meret.

Rabbah Amanda Veazy Flaks is a former PRS student (class of 2021) and currently serves as a chaplain resident at Emory University healthcare while she pursues board certification through Neshama: Association of Jewish Chaplains (NAJC). In 2022, she launched her PRS innovation project *Sinai Pastoral Care*, a concierge-style spiritual and pastoral care model for individuals and organizations. Please visit her at www.sinaipastoralcare.com.



Rabbi Lex Rofeberg is a senior Jewish educator at Judaism Unbound, where he co-hosts and produces its weekly podcast, facilitates many of its digital events, and oversees the UnYeshiva. He also currently serves on advisory boards or boards of directors for The Shalom Center, Tikkun Olam Productions, Evolve: Groundbreaking Jewish Conversations, and Mitzvah Matzos. He graduated from Brown University with a degree in Judaic Studies, and was ordained in 2021 by ALEPH. He currently lives in Providence, Rhode Island, with his wife Valerie.

Rabbi Alison Brody studied at The Jewish Theological Seminary and Mesifta Adath Wolkowisk, and has taught Talmud and Midrash in high school and adult education programs. Rabbi Brody works as a community chaplain with people in nursing care facilities and prisons, providing religious advocacy and support.

Rabbi Zachary Jellson went to PRS to help find his place in the Jewish world. Coming out of it, he realized it was his turn to hold space for others looking to explore their own spirituality. He focuses on personalizing practices so that everyone can feel wholly part of their Judaism.

Ann Zisser, an educator for over 25 years, currently teaches middle school math, as well as works one-on-one with math students, at Westchester Torah Academy in New Rochelle, NY. She earned her BA from the University of Albany, majoring in Economics, and her MS in Special Education from Hunter College. She has served as an elementary and middle school classroom teacher for many years in various Jewish day schools and synagogue religious schools. Ann also has extensive experience working with children, teens and supervising staff in camps. In addition to school and camp work, Ann tutors many students for b'nai mitzvah. She guides them through learning trope (cantillation) and supports them in the mastery of chanting haftarah and Torah readings. Ann has been active in the Westchester Jewish community for many years, serving on various committees as an active member of different synagogues. Ann lives in White Plains, NY. In her spare time, Ann loves to walk, bake and spend time near the ocean.

Michael Morgenthau is a community leader living in Toronto, Canada. He began wrestling with the Israeli-Diaspora relationship from an early age, growing up in the Jewish day school system. He has studied this relationship as part of his undergraduate and legal studies at universities in Canada, Europe, and Israel. Over the years, Michael has been a leader in a variety of Israel focused community organizations - from divergent cultural and political perspectives. Beyond Israel related advocacy, Michael is also a lay leader within the movement for Jewish renewal. When he is not volunteering within the Jewish community, Michael is mentoring future lawyers as the founder of a boutique LSAT tutoring company.