



- S I T E

COURSE CATALOG

Spring 2010 / 5770



The Jewish Site
for Innovative Teen Education
where Jewish Learning Takes on
a New Twist

AJL
Agency for Jewish Learning

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J-SITE General Information



J-SITE

J-SITE is the Teen Department of the Agency for Jewish Learning (AJL). The AJL admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students in its programs. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletics and other school administered programs.

Earn a Certificate at J-SITE . . .

Beginning in the 2008 - 2009 academic year, J-SITE has awarded Certificates in Service Learning and Leadership, Arts and Culture, Hebrew Studies, Israel Studies, and Jewish Studies.

A J-SITE certificate verifies that a student has developed an “expertise” in a particular area of study. Requirements for each certificate vary and can be found on the last page of this course catalog.

J-SITE certificates enhance college applications, Israel study program applications and applications to scholarship organizations.

Credits for J-SITE Programs . . .

J-SITE awards credits for successful completion of J-SITE courses and programs. One credit is equal to approximately one hour of study, once-a-week, for one semester. All J-SITE programs will be offered as part of one of the following specific departments:

HEB	Hebrew
ISR	Israel Studies
JAC	Jewish Arts & Culture
JSP	Jewish Studies
SLL	Service Learning & Leadership

In addition, several national programs are offered that grant a certificate upon completion. These include:

CTN	The Florence Melton Community High School
IMW	Isaac Mayer Wise Reform Teaching Certificate

Florence Melton Communiten High School Communiten!



The Florence Melton Communiten High School is four courses over two-years. Communiten can be completed independently or together with other J-SITE tracks. Communiten participants should be enrolled in both classes.

CTN 200 *The Big Ideas of Being Jewish Year 1* **(9th-12th)** **Credits: 2**

Find the Jewish sources for a meaningful approach to your life! Explore critical ideas and questions in Judaism through text-based discussion. Year 1 of a 2 year course.

CTN 210 *The American Jewish Experience* **(9th-12th)** **Credits 2**

Find the roots of your place in Jewish history! Explore how Jewish identity is a composite of the people, experiences and events that precede us.

Section	Day	Time	Teacher	Location
CTN 200	Sunday	11:00a-12:00	Rsbbi Art Donsky	Temple Ohav Shalom
CTN 210	Sunday	10:00a-11:00	Mindy Small	Temple Ohav Shalom

Hebrew



Students learn, refine and improve Hebrew skills so they can communicate in the language of our people. Hebrew classes are based on the NETA Hebrew curriculum.

HEB 100 *Alpha NETA*

(8th-12th)

Credits: 6

Alpha NETA is a multi-year course where students will earn 6 credits each year. Students will be placed in Hebrew 130 (Aleph), 140 (Bet), 150 (Gimmel) or 160 (Dalet). By the end of the Hebrew 100 series students will be able to speak in short dialogues about daily life or customs, write a paragraph on a personal topic, read a story or a folk tale and comprehend and summarize a short informative lecture on places, customs, groups of people and social phenomena.

Section	Day	Time	Teacher	Location
HEB 130A	Sunday	9:00a-9:55	Aliza Estrin/Ronit Pasternak	Chatham University
	Sunday	10:00a-10:55	Aliza Estrin/Ronit Pasternak	Chatham University
	Wednesday	6:30p-7:25	Aliza Estrin	Squirrel Hill JCC
HEB 130B	Sunday	9:00a-9:55	Aliza Estrin/Ronit Pasternak	Chatham University
	Sunday	10:00a-10:55	Aliza Estrin/Ronit Pasternak	Chatham University
	Monday	6:30p-7:25	Aliza Estrin	Beth El Congregation
HEB 140A	Sunday	9:00a-9:55	Nitsa Ford	Chatham University
	Sunday	10:00a-10:55	Nitsa Ford	Chatham University
	Wednesday	7:35p-8:30	Nitsa Ford	Squirrel Hill JCC
HEB 140B	Sunday	9:00a-9:55	Nitsa Ford	Chatham University
	Sunday	10:00a-10:55	Nitsa Ford	Chatham University
	Monday	7:35p-8:30	Aliza Estrin	Beth El Congregation

More Levels on the Next Page

Hebrew



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HEB 100 continued

Alpha NETA

(8th-12th)

Credits: 6

Alpha NETA is a multi-year course where students will earn 6 credits each year. Students will be placed in Hebrew 130 (Aleph), 140 (Bet), 150 (Gimmel) or 160 (Dalet). By the end of the Hebrew 100 series students will be able to speak in short dialogues about daily life or customs, write a paragraph on a personal topic, read a story or a folk tale and comprehend and summarize a short informative lecture on places, customs, groups of people and social phenomena.

Section	Day	Time	Teacher	Location
HEB 150A	Sunday	10:00a-10:55	Michelle Roodman	Chatham University
	Sunday	11:10a-12:05	Michelle Roodman	Chatham University
	Wednesday	7:35p-8:30	Michelle Roodman	Squirrel Hill JCC
HEB 150B	Sunday	10:00a-10:55	Michelle Roodman	Chatham University
	Sunday	11:10a-12:05	Michelle Roodman	Chatham University
	Monday	7:35p-8:30	Aliza Estrin	Beth El Congregation
HEB 160	Sunday	9:00a-9:55	Nira Lion	Chatham University
	Sunday	10:00a-10:55	Nira Lion	Chatham University
	Wednesday	6:30p-7:25	Nira Lion	Squirrel Hill JCC

Hebrew



Students learn, refine and improve Hebrew skills so they can communicate in the language of our people. Hebrew classes are based on the NETA Hebrew curriculum.

HEB 200 *Chovrot (Intermediate)*

(8th-12th)

Credits: 6

Chovrot (Intermediate) is for students in Choveret (Books) 1-14. Students earn 6 credits each year. By the end of Choveret 14, students will be able to speak in dialogues about school, family entertainment, personal preference, the weather, or place description, write a personal letter, comprehend an informative paragraph and comprehend a short informative lecture about modern life, tradition and habits. NOTE: The course numbering system for the 200 and 300 level classes has changed. The end numbers refer to which book the student is currently in. This may affect the succession from previous years.

HEB 300 *Choveret (Advanced)*

(8th-12th)

Credits: 6

Students who complete this level will be able to speak in conversation on any topic, read press releases and articles, write a personal or historical chronological report and have a general understanding of simple TV and radio news

Section	Day	Time	Teacher	Location
HEB 205	Sunday	11:10a-12:05	Aliza Estrin	Chatham University
	Sunday	12:10p-1:00	Aliza Estrin	Chatham University
	Wednesday	7:35p-8:00	Aliza Estrin	Squirrel Hill JCC
HEB 209	Sunday	11:10a-12:05	Ronit Pasternak	Chatham University
	Sunday	12:10p-1:00	Ronit Pasternak	Chatham University
	Wednesday	6:30p-7:25	Ronit Pasternak	Squirrel Hill JCC
HEB315	Sunday	9:00a-9:55	Iris Dreifuss	Chatham University
	Sunday	10:00a-10:55	Iris Dreifuss	Chatham University
	Wednesday	7:35p-8:30	Iris Dreifuss	Squirrel Hill JCC



Israel Studies



Strengthen your connection to the Jewish community locally, nationally and globally. Construct lasting personal connections to Israel through study, travel, and interactions with Israelis.

ISR 208 *Jews in the Media* (8th-12th) **Credits: 1**
Television, podcasts, and newspapers are very powerful tools to shaping public opinion on various issues. How is the way Jews are portrayed in these media a reflection of the way the public feels about Jews? How can we create a critical eye in regards to what we read, see and hear about Jews and Israel in the media? This class is designed to promote awareness of media ethics and encourage critical thinking about coverage of Israel and Jews throughout the world.

ISR 218 *Would They Be My Facebook Friend: Israeli Style* (8th-12th) **Credits: 1**
A question facing most of us today is, "will you be my facebook friend?" Using the standard facebook profile, this class will create a facebook page for famous Israeli and Jewish leaders. We will determine their favorite books, movies and of course who would they friend. This course will be a fun way to learn about our history and to understand that we are all connected.

ISR 248 *Israeli - Palestinian Conflict* (8th-12th) **Credits: 1**
This course examines the conflict between Israel and the Palestinian people. Beginning with the history of this conflict, the students will examine the current situation today and think about how and when it can be resolved.

ISR 258 *Loom of Israel* (8th-12th) **Credits: 1**
Students will examine major Israeli figures in history and culture, learn about various places and regions in Israel, and talk about important events in Israeli history. Students will also identify major current debates surrounding Israel and be able to talk about the conflict in the Middle East.

Section	Day	Time	Teacher	Location
ISR 208	Wednesday	6:30p-7:25	Steve Kroser	Squirrel Hill JCC
ISR 218	Sunday	9:00a-9:55	Brad Chotiner	Chatham University
ISR 248	Wednesday	7:35p-8:30	Steve Kroser	Squirrel Hill JCC
ISR 258	Sunday	10:00a-10:55	Melissa Werbow	Chatham University



Isaac Mayer Wise Teaching Certificate



The Isaac Mayer Wise Program is a program for 11th and 12th graders who work as teaching assistants in Reform congregations. Participants should enroll in both sections.

IMW 300 *Reform Judaism*

(11th-12th)

Credits: 2

A year-long study of Reform Judaism’s development, including its American origins, its philosophy, principles and institutions. Students will review life cycles from the Reform Jewish perspective. In addition, students will discuss environmental issues, civil rights and the role of Israel in their Jewish lives

IMW 305 *Hebrew*

(11th-12th)

Credits: 2

Can’t remember which is a bet and which is a vet? Have you wondered what the theme of the V’ahavta was? This class will help you brush up your Hebrew and delve into Jewish prayer all in preparation for someday being a religious school teacher.

Section	Day	Time	Teacher	Location
IMW 300	Tuesday	6:30p-7:25	Barak Naveh	Rodef Shalom
IMW 305	Tuesday	7:35p-8:30	Melissa Werbow	Rodef Shalom



Jewish Arts & Culture



Interpret artistic works and create your own contributions to the body of Jewish expression through visual art, music, writing and other media.

JAC 238B *Caesar to Seinfeld: How Television Helped Shape Our Identity Part II* **(10th-12th)** **Credits: 1**

This class will look at how television helped shape Jewish identity at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. We will study both Jewish and secular perspectives using television clips of comedy, drama, and the news. We will also analyze many Jewish television characters. New and continuing students are welcome.

JAC 312 *Illustrating Jewish History through Graphic Novels* **(8th-12th)** **Credits: 2**

During the first semester, students began by studying the famed Holocaust memoir “Maus” by Art Spiegelman as an example of the graphic novel genre. Now, students will choose a historical Jewish figure and create their own biographical graphic novel.

JAC 320 *HaZamir Pittsburgh* **(8th-12th)** **Credits: 4**

HaZamir Pittsburgh offers Jewish students the chance to perform Jewish music at local ensembles and at the national HaZamir Festival. HaZamir: The International Jewish High School Choir creates opportunities for high school students to gather together, sing Jewish choral music, build community and connect culturally.

Section	Day	Time	Teacher	Location
JAC 238B	Sunday	10:00a-10:55	Brad Chotiner	Chatham University
JAC 312	Sunday	11:10a-12:05	Melissa Hiller	Chatham University
JAC 320	Sunday	4:00p-6:00	Nizan Leibovich	Squirrel Hill JCC



Jewish Arts & Culture



Interpret artistic works and create your own contributions to the body of Jewish expression through visual art, music, writing and other media.

JAC 200B *Soul Food* (8th-10th) **Credits: 1**
Eat your way through the semester as you learn how to make traditional Jewish dishes that nourish your body and soul.

JAC 205 *Klezmer Band* (8th-12th) **Credits: 2**
If you enjoy playing a musical instrument, be a part of a band focusing on Jewish and Klezmer music. Open to all instrumentalists.

JAC 212 *Purim Paper Cuts* (8th-12th) **Credits: 1**
Enjoy learning about Purim while making your own cut paper artwork. We will discuss Megilat Esther and use our favorite part in a beautiful art piece. If time permits, we will make our own paper to incorporate into our finished piece.

JAC 225 *Jewish History Goes to the Movies* (8th-12th) **Credits: 2**
How historically correct are movies about Jewish history? This class will attempt to answer this question. Students will watch movies about events in Jewish History. The movies will become the basis for discussions and activities.

Section	Day	Time	Teacher	Location
JAC 200B	Wednesday	6:30p-7:25	Shulamis Rothman	Squirrel Hill JCC
JAC 205	Sunday	9:00a-9:55	Susanne Ortner-Roberts	Chatham University
JAC 212	Wednesday	7:35p-8:30	Carol Beth Yoffee	Squirrel Hill JCC
JAC 225	Sunday	9:00a-9:55	Barak Naveh	Chatham University



Jewish Studies



Study Jewish sources and apply them to real-life decisions. Participants choose from a list of Judaic courses to find the ones that meet their needs and interests.

JSP 100 *8th Grade Core* (8th) **Credits: 2**
Starting with the core question “What does it mean to be Jewish?,” this class will explore the many ways others have answered this question and will provide tools for students to begin to answer the question for themselves.

JSP 101 *Tree of Life Core* (8th-12th) **Credits: 2**
The Tree of Life Core on Tuesday evenings will explore key Jewish issues important to teens today. Focusing on the question “What does it mean to be Jewish?” this class will explore the many ways others have answered this question and will provide tools for students to begin to answer the question for themselves.

JSP 106 *Beyond the Torah: A Deeper Look at the Jewish Heroes in Nevi'im and Ketuvim* (8th-12th) **Credits: 2**
In our class, we will examine the stories in both Prophets and the Writings. We will discuss the historic context of these stories and the time periods in which they were written. Finally, we will discuss how these stories relate to our lives in the modern world.

JSP 130 *Jewish Current Events* (8th-12th) **Credits: 2**
Students will learn about, discuss and debate Jewish current events. Students will be encouraged to participate in a variety of activities that deal with issues relevant to their lives. This class will be a fun and interesting opportunity to learn about what is currently going on in the world and how it relates to us as Jews!

JSP 200B *The Thinking Jewish Teenagers Guide to Life* (8th-12th) **Credits: 1**
This course will explore contemporary issues such as: the self, substance abuse, friendship, intolerance, Israel and Tikkun Olam-repairing the world through the lens of traditional Jewish text.

Section	Day	Time	Teacher	Location
JSP 100	Sunday	11:10a-12:05	Shoshana Kraus and Steve Kroser	Chatham University
JSP 101	Tuesday	6:30p-7:25	Rabbi Chuck Diamond	Tree of Life Congregation
JSP 106	Tuesday	7:35p-8:30	Zach Sitkin	Tree of Life Congregation
JSP 130	Sunday	11:10a-12:05	Barak Naveh	Chatham University
JSP 200B	Sunday	9:00a-9:55	Rabbi Ari Goldberg	Chatham University



Jewish Studies



Study Jewish sources and apply them to real-life decisions. Participants choose from a list of Judaic courses to find the ones that meet their needs and interests.

JSP 220 *American Jewish History* (8th-12th) Credits: 2

Find the roots of your place in Jewish history! Explore how Jewish identity is a composite of the people, experiences, and events that precede us.

JSP 265 *Tzedakah: Then and Now* (8th-12th) Credits: 1

Tzedakah is one of the most highly valued Jewish ideals. It is known that the study of Jewish practice and text is the basis that informs religious values and choices. This course aims to analyze the source of the mitzvah of tzedakah and the way the mitzvah translates into practical actions.

JSP 270 *Growing Up Genesis* (8th-12th) Credits: 1

Television shows like “The O.C.” and “The Jerry Springer Show” seem like “Sesame Street” when compared with the tangled plotlines, complex relationships and problems faced by our ancestors in the Tanach! These aren’t our elementary school stories: The Tanach is full of adult issues and leaves us with questions that beg to be explored. In *Growing Up Genesis*, we’ll use dramatic games and improvisational techniques to uncover the motivations behind the choices, fill in gaps in the text, and create midrashim to help us connect with the text and decide how it speaks to our lives today. We’ll also get a taste of how the great rabbinic commentators answered our questions, and discover how the text resonates in our time.

JSP 280 *Getting There to Here; Exploring How Halacha Has Evolved* (8th-10th) Credits: 2

In this informal class, we will choose topics of interest and trace them through Biblical, Talmudic, Medieval and Modern Jewish Thought. Students should come with an open mind and a willingness to engage in discussion.

Section	Day	Time	Teacher	Location
JSP 220	Sunday	10:00a-10:55	Barak Naveh	Chatham University
JSP 265	Sunday	10:00a-10:55	Shulamis Rothman	Chatham University
JSP 270	Sunday	11:10a-12:05	Melissa Werbow	Chatham University
JSP 280	Sunday	9:00a-9:55	Melissa Werbow	Chatham University



Service Learning & Leadership



Identify social issues, devise ways to effect change, and fulfill the Jewish imperative to do tzedakah u'mishpat (justice and righteousness).

SLL 300 *Jewish Civics Initiative* **(11th and 12th)** **Credits: 2**

Blend Jewish service learning, political activism and leadership in this incredible program. In addition to weekly sessions, students participate in a four-day seminar in Washington, DC and plan a service learning project in Pittsburgh. This is a full year course.

SLL 350 *Jewish Civics Initiative 2* **(12th Grade)** **Credits: 2**

In this course, alumni of the JCI program will work to create community service and advocacy projects.

Section	Day	Time	Teacher	Location
SLL 300	Sunday	11:10-12:05	Brad Chotiner and David Katz	Chatham University
SLL 350	Sunday	11:10-12:05	Beth Goldstein	Chatham University



Rothbart Distance Learning Program of JCHS at Gratz College



This is the first on-line distance learning program focused entirely on Jewish adolescent education, and is available for English-speaking students anywhere in the world.

JSP 204 *The Whole Megillah: Five Little Books of the Bible* **Credits: 1**
 The third section of the Tanakh includes five books, originally written on parchment scrolls, that we call the Megillot. These interesting stories are each associated with a holiday in the Jewish calendar, and recall various historical events and relate biblical wisdom that is applicable today. In this course we will examine the text, learn the historical context, the liturgical connections, and the contemporary associations of each Megillah.

JSP 205 *The Torah's Top Fifty Ideas* **(8th-12th)** **Credits: 1**
 Why is the Bible more famous than known, as Voltaire once asked? Partly because it is an anthology of so many books, written over so many centuries, by so many different authors. It is life reading through the Encyclopedia Britannica, cover to cover. No one goes through an encyclopedic work like this page by page, book by book. It takes diligent study, infinite patience, a good teacher, and long years of commitment. How sad, then, that the Book of Books, the literary legact that the late Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel called our "greatest privilege," is so little read, and even worse, so little known. This vast collection of morals, poetry, laws, stories and divine revelation remains a hidden treasure for most people. Yet it forms the basis of all ethical standards ("Love your neighbor as yourself"), all great moral philosophy ("In the image of God was the human formed"), and legal mejesty ("There shall be one law for you and for the stranger among you"). Too many people think of the Bible as a collection of outmoded laws, descriptions of old-fashioned customes such as animal sacrifice, boring genealogies, and irrelevant miracle tales. Yet the core of the Tanakh contains the essential moral legacy of the Jewish People. This course will examine fifty verses and verse-clusters that are the fundamental principles of Jewish ethics, and the passages which make the Hebrew Bible the most important collection of books ever written.

ISR 206 *Israel Today: Realizing the Dream* **(8th-12th)** **Credits: 1**
 This course begins and ends with a look at and celebration of the wonder of Israel. Students combine the 4MAT method used throughout the Etgar curriculum with a problem-solving approach for a realistic, sophisticated, and in-depth study of the many challenges Israel faces today. Lessons cover Israel's pursuit of peace, diversity, and social justice challenges. The course is offered in partnership with Project Etgar, a joint curriculum initiative of the Melton Research Center of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. It is designed as a natural follow up for students who studied in Etgar schools in sixth and seventh grade, but is open to any teen who want to learn about Israel in an interactive way

Section	Teacher	Location
JSP 204	Michael Schatz	Distance Learning
JSP 205	Rabbi Dov Peretz Elkins	Distance Learning
ISR 206	Rabbi Lori Forman-Jacobi	Distance Learning



Rothbart Distance Learning Program of JCHS at Gratz College



This is the first on-line distance learning program focused entirely on Jewish adolescent education, and is available for English-speaking students anywhere in the world.

JSP 208 *Dilemmas in Jewish History*

Credits: 1

Jewish history presents many dilemmas of Jews who lived in different societies. Jews were usually straggers and sojourners in the lands where they lived, their history the symbol of homelessness and vulnerability. They wanted to obey God’s laws but they wanted to stay alive too. The societies in which they lived forced life choices upon them, which were rarely clear options of “right and wrong.” The course will question how Jews fared in the societies in which they lived and what dilemmas they had to solve in order to survive against all odds.

JSP 209 *Why the Jews: History of Anti-Semitism*

Credits: 1

11th and 12th grade students may take this class for college credit

This course will examine the diverse forms that hatred of Jews has taken throughout history, from the ancient world to the present day. Our focus is the extremely difficult question: why have Jews been singled out for hatred so often for so many centuries?

JSP 212 *Reform Judaism*

(8th-12th)

Credits: 2

A year-long study of Reform Judaism’s development, including its American origin, its philosophy, principles and institutions. Students will review life cycles from the Reform Jewish perspective. Students will discuss environmental issues, civil rights and the role of Israel in their Jewish lives. This course touches on topical issues like the history of anti-Semitism, homosexuality and CCAR rulings. Students will discuss various issues, dialogue with one another and explore their own belief system.

ISR 320 *Israel: Current Events and Controversies*

Credits: 1

This course is designed to 1) provide an introduction to the political history of Israel, from the emergence of the Zionist movement through the present, 2) situate the development of an Israeli national identity, focusing on a variety of social, cultural, and political features, and 3) provide comparative perspectives on modern national states cultures, and identities.

Issues to be discussed include immigration, minorities and social integration, the political, military, and educational systems, media popular culture, and relationships with neighboring states and the world community

Section	Teacher	Location
JSP 208	Dr. Kathy Beller	Distance Learning
JSP 209	Dr. Katherine Aron Beller	Distance Learning
JSP 212	Renee Goldfarb	Distance Learning
ISR 320	Asaf Romirowsky	Distance Learning

J-SITE Faculty



DR. KATHERINE ARON BELLER grew up in London and attended Manchester University where she obtained her first and second degrees in History. After moving to Israel in 1993, she completed a Ph.D at Haifa University in Jewish History. Dr. Beller has been working at the Israel Museum in the Judaica and Jewish Ethnography Wing since 2003. She is currently head of the Photographic Archive of the Judaica Information Center and has taught several online courses at Gratz College. Besides the publication of several articles, she is writing her first book titled “The Jews in the Inquisition: Modena 1598-1650.”

BRAD CHOTINER has taught at Hebrew high schools in Cincinnati, OH and Denver, CO and has a wealth of high school teaching experience. Prior to moving to Pittsburgh, Brad was a camp Director and School Teacher.

IRIS DREIFUSS has an M.Ed. in Educational Counseling and a teaching certificate from the University of Tel Aviv. Prior to moving to Pittsburgh, she worked as a Special Needs Unit Director and School Counselor for the Israeli Office of Education.

RABBI DOV PERETZ ELKINS was born in Philadelphia and is a graduate of Gratz College for Hebrew Teachers. He received his BA in literature from Temple University, and his M.H.L. and rabbinic ordination from the Jewish Theological Seminary. Rabbi Elkins received his doctorate in counseling and humanistic education in 1976 at Colgate Rochester Divinity School.

ALIZA ESTRIN received her teaching certificate in Israel before moving to Pittsburgh. She has worked for many years as an instructor of Hebrew language at Congregation Beth El of the South Hills.

NITSA FORD has a BA in Political Science and International Relations and is currently studying for her MA in Public Administration. Nitsa taught Hebrew in Wisconsin and worked with American teens for the Jewish Agency. Nitsa also worked for the Israeli government for three years and as a student, she worked as a one year program ‘madricha’ at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

RABBI LORI FORMAN JACOBI is the Senior Vice-Principal for the Bergen County High School of Jewish Studies. Prior to this position, she served as the Director of The Jewish Resource Center at UJA-Federation, worked at The American Jewish Committee in Interreligious Affairs, and served as principal for The West Side Jewish Community School. Rabbi Forman-Jacobi is the co-author of Sacred Intentions: Daily Inspiration to Strengthen the Spirit and Restful Reflections: Nighttime Inspiration to Calm the Soul.

RABBI ARI GOLDBERG is currently the Associate Rabbi of Congregation Poale Zedeck as well as the chapter director for the Pittsburgh NCSY. Rabbi Goldberg also runs the Jewish Student Union club at Allderdice High School. Rabbi Goldberg and his family moved to Pittsburgh from Jerusalem and in his free time Rabbi Goldberg likes to play all sports!

J-SITE Faculty



RENÉE GOLDFARB joined the JCHS Administration full-time as Director of Community Affairs in September, 2007. However, Renee first joined JCHS as a faculty member in 2003, and in 2006 assumed the position of Branch Director for The Baldwin School branch location in Bryn Mawr. Previously, Renee served as the Consultant for Adolescent Education at Auerbach CAJE and the Regional Director for Youth and Informal Education for the Pennsylvania Council of the Union for Reform Judaism.

BETH GOLDSTEIN is the Director of Teen Education at the Agency for Jewish Learning. Before moving to Pittsburgh, she served as the Director of Lifelong Learning at Congregation Sinai in Milwaukee, WI. Beth has a Masters in Jewish Education and a Masters in Jewish Communal Service from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and a BA in music from Brandeis University.

MELISSA HILLER is the Director of the American Jewish Museum, where she curates exhibitions that focus on modern and contemporary art. She is responsible for advancing the museum's exhibition development, fundraising and outreach programming. Melissa earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Pittsburgh and her Masters of Arts from the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College.

DAVID KATZ has over 7 years of experience working with Jewish youth, 3 of which were spent as the youth director at Congregation Beth Shalom. David currently works at the Hillel Jewish University Center as the Director of J'Burgh, an organization focused on enhancing the quality of life for Jewish graduate students and young professionals.

SHOSHANA KRAUS is the Assistant Director of the Teen Department at the AJL. She grew up in the Metro-Detroit area and studied Arts and Humanities at Michigan State University. She has 14 years of teaching experience in both outdoor and traditional classroom settings. Shoshana is new to Pittsburgh and is excited to teach and learn in a vibrant Jewish community.

STEVE KROSER was born in South Africa and made Aliyah when he was 16. He completed high school in Israel and became a paratrooper in the Israeli Defense Force. Steve's two greatest passions are his family and his Jewish heritage and he loves to share both. His full time job is freelance IT consulting.

NIZAN LEBOVICH graduated Magna Cum Laude from the Rubin Academy in Tel Aviv with degrees in both Composition and Conducting. Nizan received his Master's of Arts in Orchestral Conducting from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA. He currently conducts orchestras and ensembles in the United States, Europe, and Israel.

NIRA LION is the Director of the AJL Hebrew Language Programs and the NETA Hebrew Coordinator. In 2002, Nira received the Grinspoon Steinhardt Award for excellence in Jewish education as teacher, mentor, and leader. She is a graduate of Hebrew University in Jerusalem majoring in Hebrew literature, Bible and Linguistics, where she also received teaching certification. She earned a M. Ed. from the University of Pittsburgh.

J-SITE Faculty



BARAK NAVEH graduated from Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, with a degree in history education. He completed his Masters degree in Administration and Policy Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. He is a history teacher at Schenley High School where he teaches 10th grade U.S. History and 12th grade World Politics in the IB program.

SUSANNE ORTNER-ROBERTS is a well-known Klezmer clarinet player and teacher from Augsburg, Germany. She is a soloist as well as the founder, arranger and clarinetist of the German Klezmerquartett “Sing Your Soul”. She is the clarinetist of “The Ortner-Roberts-Duo”. Together with her husband Tom Roberts on piano they play a unique blend of Yiddish and Creole Music, Harlem Stride, Swing, Early Calypso, Classical and Gypsy. Susanne has performed in Germany, Israel, Switzerland and the United States. During her studies (mainly at the former Leopold Mozart Academy of Music in Augsburg), she received a classical music education. In addition to this she worked on different styles such as jazz, Klezmer, and other folk music genres. Susanne reaches a high degree of authenticity when interpreting traditional Jewish pieces of music.

RONIT PASTERNAK received a BA in Education with honors from the University of Pittsburgh. She is a senior Hebrew teacher who began teaching Hebrew at SAJS and has now taught Hebrew for 12 years at Community Day School. Ronit was selected by the AJL to be one of the five lead teachers studying methods of teaching a foreign language at University of Pittsburgh. Ronit took the NETA training course, participated in their seminars and is experienced in teaching Hebrew using the NETA program.

MICHELLE ROODMAN is currently completing her Bachelors degree at the University of Pittsburgh in Anthropology, with certificates in Jewish Studies, Hebrew and Children’s Literature. After growing up in Texas, Michelle spent a year in Israel studying and working. Additionally, she studied for a certificate in Hebrew Language Teaching from NETA.

ASAF ROMIROWSKY is the Israel Affairs Associate at Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia and Campus Watch Associate Fellow of the Middle East Forum. Mr. Romirowsky, a former Israel Defense Force (IDF) International Relations liaison officer in the West Bank, currently serves as an IDF reserve liaison officer to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. He holds a B.A. in Middle East Affairs and Contemporary Jewish History and from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, an M.A. in Holocaust and Genocide Studies from West Chester University. In addition, he earned an M.A. in International Relations and Middle East Affairs at Villanova University, where he focused on the differences and similarities between the Mitchell Report in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland. Mr. Romirowsky is currently working on a PhD in Mediterranean Studies at Kings College, London.

SHULAMIS ROTHMAN is a graduate of Beth Rivkah Teacher Seminary, having taught at all grade levels for over 30 years.

J-SITE Faculty



MEIRA SACKS was born and raised in Chicago, Il where her parents instilled in her a great love of Judaism and Israel. Meira attended a one year program at Bar-Ilan University and then completed her undergraduate degree at Binghamton University where she was very involved in Jewish life on campus. After graduation, she worked for Hadassah Jewish Women’s Organization. She married and moved to Pittsburgh where she earned her Master Degree in education from Duquesne University. She has taught both secular subjects and Hebrew at schools in the area.

MICHAEL SCHATZ the director of the Rothbart Distance Learning Program and the Gratz Hebrew Ulpan as well as an Etgar Teacher Educator for Project Etgar. Michael has worked in various formal and informal Jewish educational settings for twenty years. He holds an AB in Jewish Studies from Vassar College, an M.Ed. in Elementary Education from Arcadia University, and an M.A.Jed. from Gratz College. In addition, he is an Ed.D. candidate in Jewish Education at Gratz College.

LIORA SCHLESINGER has a BA in Early Childhood Education from Bar Ilan University in Israel, and a Teaching Certificate from Talpiot College. She was selected by the AJL to be one of the five lead teachers studying methods of teaching a foreign language at University of Pittsburgh. Liora is a senior Hebrew teacher with experience teaching at both Beth El Congregation’s religious school and Hebrew at J-SITE.

ZACH SITKIN hails all the way from Philadelphia in order to attend the University of Pittsburgh where he will soon finish two degrees; a BA in Religious studies and a BS in Psychology. During the year he works as the Judaics teacher for 5th-7th grades at Tree of Life, where he also finished his second year as the USY advisor

MELISSA WERBOW earned a Masters degree in Jewish Education and Jewish Communal Service from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles, CA. She was a recipient of the prestigious Wexner Graduate Fellowship and is an active participant in the alumni foundation. She served for three years as the Director of the Religious School at Stephen S. Wise Temple in Los Angeles, CA.

CAROL BETH YOFFEE graduated from the University of Michigan with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic and Interior Design. Her past teaching experience has focused on parsha, teffilah and haftarah trope. She uses art techniques as a method to teach and enhance her class lessons. Carol Beth’s talents include watercolor, Hebrew calligraphy, jewelry, quilling and mixed media.

J-SITE Certificate Requirements



A J-SITE certificate verifies that a student has developed an “expertise” in a particular area of study. J-SITE certificates enhance college applications, Israel study program applications and applications to scholarship organizations.

The requirements for certificates are as follows:

Service Learning and Leadership

- Complete at least 8 SLL credits
- Perform 40 hours of outside service hours OR serve in a leadership capacity in 2 significant year-long experiences (at least one within the Jewish community).
- Create and present a reflective product explaining the Jewish context of the student’s volunteer or leadership involvement.

Jewish Arts & Culture

- Complete at least 8 JAC credits.
- Pursue an artistic discipline (music, art, drama, etc.) for at least two years.
- Complete an independent project with a J-SITE faculty member.
- Write a reflective Jewish artist statement.

Hebrew

- Complete at least 24 HEB credits.
- Complete two levels of Hebrew OR reach Hebrew 300.
- Create and present a reflective product.

Israel Studies

- Complete at least 8 ISR credits.
- Attend an approved educational experience in Israel.
- Create and present a reflective product explaining the student’s personal connection to Israel.

Jewish Scholars Program

- Complete at least 8 JSP credits.
- Create and present a reflective product applying Jewish sources learned in the program to a real life issue(s) or situation(s).



- S I T E



J-SITE is the Teen Department of the Agency for Jewish Learning (AJL).
The AJL is a beneficiary agency of the United Jewish Federation of Pittsburgh

For more information please call 412-521-1101

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