

From the Dean's Desk: New Dual-Degree Programs: JD-MBA and Semikha+MBA

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In this week's Torah portion, we see the impact of the world's first management consultant.

Yisro, the father-in-law of Moshe, brings together his newfound Torah knowledge and his organizational expertise to recommend a **new structure for the Jews' judicial system**. The new hierarchical court system would leverage Moshe's time, tap expertise where it is most needed, and bring efficiency where there had been gridlock.

Developing multi-faceted leaders and experts in the Torah and legal realms is the goal of **two new dual-degree programs** we have created with other YU graduate schools.

Building on the success of the [fast-growing MBA program we introduced in 2021](#), we are introducing dual-degree programs with YU's Cardozo School of Law (a JD-MBA program) and its RIETS Rabbinical School (a Semikha+MBA program). We already had our pioneering student in the Semikha+MBA program **this Fall** and we look forward to welcoming pioneers to the JD-MBA next Fall.

The **JD-MBA** program promises to develop business-fluent legal talent. The **Semikha+MBA** program promises to develop organizational skills in our future rabbinic leaders; executive directors of schools, shuls, and non-profits; principals of day schools; and chairs of boards of directors in those institutions.

Please see below for more details on each program.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Noam'.

Noam Wasserman
Dean

Lawyers with Business Expertise: JD-MBA

The JD-MBA program will build on the world-class strengths of YU's [Cardozo School of Law](#) and Sy Syms' fast-growing MBA program.

After taking law classes at Cardozo for two years, JD-MBA students will spend their third year in the Sy Syms MBA program before returning to Cardozo for their last year of law school. In **just four years**, the students will be able to earn both degrees.

Dean Melanie Leslie of the Cardozo School of Law commented: "As their careers progress, lawyers are often called upon to lead, and business education is a real asset that propels a lawyer's career. An MBA also enhances a private-sector lawyer's ability to understand their clients' business needs, which enables them to offer better legal advice."

Developing Rabbinic Leadership: Semikha+MBA

Students in the RIETS Semikha program are required to do a "co-req" with another YU graduate school. They now have the option to do an **MBA as their co-req**, developing the skills needed to lead, build effective teams, think strategically, market their organizations, and understand its financial or budgetary structure. As I mentioned to [The Commentator](#), "Shuls and schools get stronger when their rav or rebbe has leadership and business skills, and the rav or rebbe has a much deeper and broader range of ways to impact the Klal [community]."

The Semikha+MBA program is **at the core of Sy Syms' mission** to develop Torah-grounded professionals who excel in the workplace and in the community, and the program's courses are built on both market-leading skills and YU's Torah values.

Because the MBA program is asynchronous (with optional in-person sessions each semester), **students control the timing** (e.g., they can time shift their classwork to whichever days of the week or times of day are best for them) and can be in the program **from anywhere** in the world, such as the Gruss Kollel in Jerusalem where many RIETS students go for their last year or two in the program. Students can spread out their MBA courses over their last two or three years in the Semikha program. They can decide how long they want the program to take and can even speed up or slow down during the program.

The MBA program has a wide range of **electives**, and is starting to introduce **concentrations**, with the first concentration focusing on Real Estate. Also in development is a course on Non-Profit Leadership that might be of particular interest to Semikha+MBA students.

The program is open to **alumni of Yeshiva College (YC) or Sy Syms**, and to students who came to the Semikha program after graduating from another university. Gaining business skills may be particularly valuable for YC alumni who didn't earn an undergraduate business degree.

For more information, please email Dean Noam Wasserman at noam@yu.edu.