

RABBI ISAAC ELCHANAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY SEMIKHAH REQUIREMENTS

The following is offered as an aid to RIETS students in determining their requirements. It is a fact sheet - not a catalogue. The RIETS catalogue is available at www.riets.edu. Any questions regarding specific coursework and semikha requirements should be referred to the office of the Dean of RIETS, 2540 Amsterdam Avenue, Zysman Hall, Room Z106, 212-960-5310.

RIETS FOUR-YEAR SEMIKHA PROGRAM

- I. Three years (six semesters) of "**Full-Time Study**" (Sunday morning-Friday morning).
II A "**Fourth Year Program**" (two semesters) combining Halacha LeMa'aseh with fieldwork, internships, and professional seminars.

Please note: Besides the particular requirements of the program, there is a four-year residency requirement. Students must learn full time on campus for three years and at least one seder a day for the fourth year. Sample schedules for the four years of study can be found in Appendix A.

I. "**Full Time Study**" - Students are expected to learn in Yeshiva, *at a minimum*, from Sunday through Thursday from 9:00AM to 3:00PM and on Friday morning. During these times, students take upon themselves:

- A. A "**Core Curriculum**" comprised of shiurim in **Talmud** and **Halacha**,
- B. A **Corequisite** of Kollel study, an approved YU Masters Degree or classes in Jewish Thought (Machshevet Yisrael).
- C. **Professional Classes** in one of five professional tracks

Each of these requirements is described below.

A. **Core Curriculum**

The Core Curriculum makes up the majority of the learning hours between 9:00AM-3:00PM, Sunday through Thursday. For most students, there will be a **main focus** of learning and a series of **supplementary courses**.

1. During the first three years of Semikha, the **main focus** consists of the following:
 - a. For four semesters, students attend a Talmud shiur, learning the Masekhta being studied throughout the Yeshiva. Shiurim are offered on many different levels and the RIETS office makes placement decisions. Most shiurim have preparation time from 9:00AM-12:00 NOON and shiur from 12:45-2:45PM, but schedules differ based on the day of the week and the particular magid shiur.
 - b. For two semesters, students study the first "*cheilek*" of Yoreh Deah, with a concentration on Ta'aruvot and Basar B'chalav. Examinations are given in each section. Students generally learn Yoreh Deah in their third year of Semikha, either in New York or in the RIETS Kollel in Yerushalayim.
2. In addition, the following program of **supplementary courses** must be completed over the four years of Semikha:
 - A. Two semesters of "**Contemporary Jewish Law**" (Thursdays 1:00-2:40 PM) Contemporary Halachic issues taught by various Roshei Yeshiva and Rabbanim. Students in the RIETS Kollel in Yerushalayim may fulfill this requirement with a different course.

- B. One semester of **Hilkhhot Niddah**
Hilkhhot Niddah is offered each fall, generally twice a week during part of the morning seder. This requirement may, in some years, also be fulfilled with an intensive class offered in June, at a YU Summer kollel, or, with permission, through independent study and the completion of an examination offered by the RIETS office.
- C. One semester of **Hilkhhot Aveilut**
Hilkhhot Aveilut is offered each spring, generally twice a week during part of the morning seder. This requirement may, in some years, also be fulfilled with an intensive class offered in June, at a YU Summer kollel, or, with permission, through independent study and the completion of an examination offered by the RIETS office.
- D. Two semesters of **Masekhet Hullin**
Hullin is a generally a prerequisite or co-requisite for Yoreh Deah, and can be studied in one of two ways:
- i. As one of the two years of Talmud Shiur (instead of the Masechta learned by the rest of the Yeshiva).
 - ii. Hullin chaburot as part of the Marcos Katz Kollel, in years when the Kollel in learning Hullin.

Please note: In Rabbi Weiss's daily Yoreh Deah shiur in New York and in the RIETS Kollel in Yerushalayim Hullin is studied together with Yoreh Deah and there is no separate Hullin requirement.

- E. Two semesters of the “**Fourth Year Halakha Lema’aseh Program**”
Students study Halacha leMa'aseh with our Roshei Yeshiva. Weekly Chaburot in Eruvin, Bishul B'Shabbat, Gerut & Milah, Hechsher Keilim, and Ishut (Thu 1:30 -2:30 PM) are supplemented by guided textual study. Bechinot are given on each section. Students generally complete this requirement during their final year of semikha. More information is attached in a separate sheet that you will receive when you register for this program.

B. Co-Requisite

In addition to these requirements of the Semikha Program, students must also complete one of the following co-requisites:

1. Six semesters of **Kollel study**
The Marcos & Adina Katz Kollel, led by Rav Hershel Schachter, learns approximately 20 "blat" of Gemara per semester. The Kollel meets from 3:00-6:30 PM in the Main Beis Medrash. Those accepted as chaverim of the Kollel must keep three sederim daily. In addition to morning and afternoon seder, kollel fellows must arrange a regular evening seder.
- i. A **Masters Degree** at one of Yeshiva University's following schools: The Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education & Administration, the Bernard Revel Graduate School of Jewish Studies, or the Wurzweiler School of Social Work. Related Masters Degrees from other institutions must be approved in advance by the RIETS office.
- ii. Completion of the "**Machshevet Yisrael**" program, consisting of 12 courses in Jewish Philosophy. These afternoon classes are listed as "JTH" classes on the RIETS schedule. Certain Courses in the RIETS Kollel in Yerushalayim and the Bernard Revel Graduate School may also be used to fulfill this requirement.

Kollel Semesters may, at times, be combined with Machshevet Yisrael and graduate school classes to fulfill the co-requisite requirement, with permission from the Dean of RIETS.

C. Professional Classes

1. **Core Requirements** –
Six courses, offered on Fridays during the first two years of Semikha.
 - a. Pastoral Psychology I
 - b. Pastoral Psychology II
 - c. Survey of Professional Rabbinics
 - d. Survey of the American Jewish Community
 - e. Public Speaking I
 - f. Jewish Communal Leadership (or Group Facilitation for the ORG track)

2. **Advanced Track Requirements** (track chosen in the second year of Semikha)
 - a) Education: A Masters Degree from the Azrieli School of Jewish Education and Administration.
 - b) Community Rabbinate / Pulpit:
 - i. One additional Friday class in the second year (Homiletics)
 - ii. One additional Friday class in the second or third year (Outreach I – offered every other year)
 - iii. One additional Friday class in the third or fourth years (Public Speaking II)
 - iv. Three mid-week courses in the fourth year (Advanced Pastoral Counseling, Derasha Workshop, and Practical Rabbis)
 - c) Community Outreach and Campus Leadership:
 - i. Two additional Friday classes in the second or third year (Outreach I, Youth and Campus Outreach – both classes are offered every other year)
 - ii. Two additional Friday classes in the third or fourth years (Public Speaking II, Outreach II – offered every other year)
 - iii. Three mid-week courses in the fourth year (Advanced Pastoral Counseling, Derasha Workshop, and Practical Rabbis)
 - d) Organizational Leadership:
 - i. Field Visits in the Fall semester of the second year
 - ii. A Masters Degree - MBA or MPH from an approved institution.
 - e) Chaplaincy:
 - i. 4 Credits / Units of CPE credit from an accredited CPE training institution.
 - ii. One class in the fourth year of Semikha (Advanced Pastoral Counseling)
3. **"Third Year" and "Fourth Year" Shimush** / Fieldwork Internship
Hands-on experience in the student's professional rabbinic track. Third year shimush is a 20-30 hour commitment over one semester. Fourth year interns serve in part-time position throughout their final year of Semikha and attend special seminars in professional rabbinics.

A chart, showing the four year progression for each track can be found at the end of this document as Appendix B.

II. Fourth Year Program - Learning and Internship

- A. Fourth year students must continue to learn minimally one Seder a day in Yeshiva. The scheduling of that Seder is flexible and will depend on the internship placement assigned to each student. (For example, those with Chinuch internships usually teach in the morning and learn in Yeshiva in the afternoon). Part of this Seder involves study of issues in Halacha Lema'aseh.

As described earlier, students must complete two semesters of the “**Fourth Year Halakha Lema’aseh Program**”, consisting of units in Eruvin, Bishul B'Shabbat, Gerut & Milah, Hechsher Keilim, and Ishut. Chaburot take place on Thursdays from 1:30-2:30 and are supplemented by guided textual study. Bechinot are given on each section. More information is attached in a separate sheet that you will receive when you register for this program.

- B. Students serve in part-time positions in synagogues, schools and hospitals under the guidance of an experienced mentor. See above in "Professional Requirements."

General Notes

- ∞ • Class offerings and schedules are available at the RIETS office at the beginning of each semester. They are listed in the “RIETS Guidelines for Registration” for each semester.
- ∞ • Students must register each semester with the RIETS office in order to receive credit.
- ∞ • Students attending the Gruss Kollel should meet with Rabbi Bronstein before leaving to discuss which requirements can be fulfilled in Israel.
- ∞ In addition, students must pass a comprehensive Hebrew Language Examination, demonstrating proficiency in the Hebrew language. This test is offered each semester and students must register in advance of the test as noted in the RIETS calendar. Some students who have completed an approved Ulpan or similar program may be exempted by the RIETS office.

Appendix A

Sample Schedule # 1

A student starting semikha in his last of year of YC or SSSB, in the education track might proceed as follows:

First Year

- Fall: Talmud
Pastoral Psychology I
Survey of Professional Opportunities
- Spring: Talmud
Pastoral Psychology II
Survey of the American Jewish Community

Second Year

- Fall: Talmud
Contemporary Halakhah
Hilkhhot Niddah
Public Speaking I
Graduate Classes at Azrieli
- Spring: Talmud
Contemporary Halakhah
Hilkhhot Aveilut
Leadership
Graduate Classes at Azrieli

Third Year

- Fall: Hullin / Yoreh Deah
Graduate Classes at Azrieli
- Spring: Hullin / Yoreh Deah
Graduate Classes at Azrieli

Fourth Year

- Fall: Internship Program (Student Teaching)
4th Year Halakhah L'Maaseh
- Spring: Internship Program (Student Teaching)
4th Year Halakhah L'Maaseh

Sample Schedule # 2

A Student starting semikha after college, in community rabbinate / Pulpit track might proceed as follows:

First Year

Fall: Talmud
Contemporary Halakhah
Pastoral Psychology I
Survey of Professional Opportunities

Spring: Talmud
Contemporary Halakhah
Pastoral Psychology II
Survey of the American Jewish Community

Second Year

Fall: Talmud
Hilchot Niddah
Public Speaking I
Leadership

Spring: Talmud
Hilchot Aveilut
Outreach I
Homiletics

Third Year

Fall: Hullin / Yoreh Deah

Spring: Hullin / Yoreh Deah
Public Speaking II

Fourth Year

Fall: Internship Program (Student Teaching)
4th Year Halakhah L'Maaseh
Adv. Pastoral Counseling
Derasha Workshop
Practical Rabbinics

Spring: Internship Program (Student Teaching)
4th Year Halakhah L'Maaseh

Appendix B - Track Overview

	Education	Pulpit	Outreach	Chaplaincy	ORG Leadership	
Yr I	Fall	Pastoral Psych I	Pastoral Psych I	Pastoral Psych I	Pastoral Psych I	Pastoral Psych I
		Professional Opps	Professional Opps	Professional Opps	Professional Opps	Professional Opps
	Spring	Pastoral Psych II	Pastoral Psych II	Pastoral Psych II	Pastoral Psych II	Pastoral Psych II
		American JC	American JC	American JC	American JC	American JC
Yr II	Fall	Public Speaking I	Public Speaking I	Public Speaking I	Public Speaking I	Field Visits
			Leadership	Leadership		
	Spring	Leadership	Outreach I or II	Outreach I or II	Outreach I	Public Speaking I
			Homiletics	Youth and Campus		Group Facilitation
Yr III	Fall	3rd Yr Internship	3rd Yr Internship	3rd Yr Internship	3rd Yr Internship	3rd Yr Internship
	Spring		Public Speaking II	Public Speaking II		
			<i>Optional: Outreach I or -II</i>	Outreach I or II		
Yr IV	Fall & Spring	4th Year Internship	4th Year Internship	4th Year Internship	4th Year Internship	4th Year Internship
		Internship Seminars	Internship Seminars	Internship Seminars	Internship Seminars	Internship Seminars
			Adv Past Counseling	Adv Past Counseling	Adv Past Counseling	
			Derasha Workshop	Derasha Workshop		
			Practical Rabbinics	Practical Rabbinics		
Plus	Masters, AGS			4 Units, CPE		