

**WURZWEILER SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
YESHIVA UNIVERSITY**

**MAJOR CONCEPTS IN JEWISH CULTURAL HISTORY
SWK6191
SPRING 2016**

The Value Base of Jewish Professional Practice: Sources, Interpretations and Historical Applications

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Jewish people are mandated by biblical law and tradition to establish a caring and just community for all its members. Core Jewish values are imbedded in Torah precepts, imminent in critical encounters among biblical figures, and translated into explicit rabbinic injunctions and teachings that prescribe specific actions to promote ideal human relationships between individuals and among members in a larger communal framework. Throughout history, Jews have created strategies and communal structures that translate these core values into action. The result has been the creation of a structured caring community in which members can both care for and govern themselves.

Various structural models of Jewish communal life and self-governance will be explored from Antiquity, through the Middle Ages and Modernity. The European *Kehila* will be utilized as a model upon which subsequent communities established their organizational life.

This course will explore some of the salient core values that underpin Jewish collective life, how Jews organized their collective corporate identities to care for, support, and maintain their members in an organized caring community. Students will trace the development and application of these values through various stages of Jewish history; how these values have been translated into action; and how they are interpreted and applied today in the mission and vision statements and program initiatives of contemporary Jewish communal agencies.

COURSE COMPETENCY OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will demonstrate a range of competencies related to the course objectives. Students will demonstrate their ability to:

1. Identify the core values that have been, and continue to be, the foundations of Jewish life and communal practice (**EPAs# 2.1.2 a & 2.1.3 a**)
2. Appreciate the importance of community in defining collective Jewish identity (**EPAs# 2.1.7 a,b**)
3. Identify some of the major structural features of Jewish self-government with emphasis on the European *Kehila* (**EPAs# 2.1.3 a**)
4. Read and analyze a primary source, understand the context in which it was written, and connect it to its contemporary meaning and relevance in professional practice (**EPAs# 2.1.3 a & 2.1.7 a**)
5. Understand the role of Jewish values in shaping the formation of responsive collective structures and services throughout the Diaspora (**EPAs# 2.1.3 a,c**)

LEARNING METHODS

Learning will occur through a variety of methods, with the main focus on reading primary sources together in class, along with active class discussion. Additional readings and brief overviews will also serve as a tool for understanding the context of the values under discussion and their historical application and contemporary relevance.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

Students are expected to complete all required reading assignments for each class session and come prepared to participate actively in class discussions and other group assignments. Readings will include primary sources distributed in class and articles and book chapters which amplify on the class themes. All required readings preceded by an asterisk * are available on e-res.

B. ASSIGNMENTS

Students will be assigned a first paper, an oral class presentation and a final assignment that will contribute to the development of an understanding of the core values of Jewish communal practice, their origins, historical development in Jewish thought, rabbinic law and community practice, as well as their applications in contemporary Jewish communal agencies.

1. Mid-term Assignment

Prepare a 5-7 page paper that addresses the values and characteristics that have promoted enduring Jewish communities throughout history. Integrate the concepts and arguments made by Joshua Praver and Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik in

their respective articles in the Required Reading. Compare and contrast their unique perspectives on the meaning and functions of the Jewish community and the role Jewish values play in shaping Jewish community life and its institutions.

The paper must be double-spaced and written and organized according to APA style, including a references page. (EPAs# 2.1.2 a & 2.1. 3 a)

2. In-class Power Point Presentations on Core Jewish Values

Students will work in pairs; each pair is responsible for researching one of the Jewish values identified in class that informs the mission and delivery of services of contemporary Jewish communal service agencies. The class presentation should be seen as an opportunity to teach fellow students in-depth about the specific value, utilizing primary source readings, contemporary Jewish source materials and interactive teaching aids. Include appropriate U Tube or other video clips from online sources that help explicate the value in action.

Students will prepare power point presentations for their assigned session and submit them to the instructor after the session. The final slide of the presentation should be a reference page. Each presentation will be approximately 60 minutes long.

The presentation should incorporate the following elements:

1. Describe the value including its Biblical or rabbinic textual origins, *Halachic* translation into action and deeds, and practical applications in Jewish life. Identify and utilize both biblical and rabbinic primary sources (both from *Halacha* and *Midrash*), wherever applicable, that clearly define the meaning, interpretation, and application of that value within Jewish life. Use this as an opportunity to conduct a learning session using classical Jewish sources. Presenters will be responsible for bringing in copies of each primary source covered, as handouts.
2. Specify relevant historical references related to communal structures and specific service delivery mechanisms by which that value was put into community practice. Give examples of how the value was translated into organized voluntary activity in support of individual Jews and the Jewish community.
3. Presenters should identify two online articles relevant to the chosen value and send them electronically to the professor in advance of the class presentation, who will distribute it to class participants. One should represent a scholarly piece drawn from a journal or teaching guide. The second article should represent a current events story from the Jewish Week, Forward, JTA or other Anglo-Jewish publications which reports on the application of this value in Jewish communal life.

Students are expected to read these articles in advance of the class session.

5. Choose one Jewish communal agency whose current mission statement clearly reflects the core Jewish value of your presentation. Discuss the centrality and the alignment of the value with the current priorities and services delivered by the agency to the community. How does this value commitment influence the quality and responsiveness of services to clients and the community as a whole? How do current economic conditions impact the capacity of the agency to fulfill its mission and the fulfillment of the core value?
6. Presenters should also prepare a list of two questions to stimulate class discussion following the formal presentation.

(EPAs# 2.1.3 a,c & 2.1.9 a)

PLAGIARISM

Students should remember that the School will not condone plagiarism in any form and will sanction acts of plagiarism. A student who presents someone else's work as his or her own work is stealing from the authors or persons who did the original thinking and writing. Plagiarism occurs when a student directly copies another's work without citation; when a student paraphrases major aspects of another's work without citation; and when a student combines the work of different authors into a new statement without reference to those authors. It is also plagiarism to use the ideas and/or work of another student and present them as your own. It is not plagiarism to formulate your own presentation of an idea or concept as a reaction to someone else's work; however, the work to which you are reacting should be discussed and appropriately cited. Any student who can be shown to have plagiarized any part of any assignment in this course will automatically **FAIL** the course and will be referred to the Associate Dean for disciplinary action that may include expulsion.

HIPAA ALERT

In line with the new HIPAA regulations concerning protected health information, it is important that you understand that any case information you present from your work, will need to be de-identified. What this means is that any information that would allow another to identify the person needs to be changed or eliminated. This includes obvious things like names and birth dates but may also contain other information that is so unique to the person that it will allow for identification, including diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender. If diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender is directly related to the case presentation it can be included if it will not allow for identification.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Given the nature of classroom discussion and the presentation of case materials and at times personal revelation in class, students are reminded that the same commitment to confidentiality with clients extends to classmates. What is shared in class stays in class.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations are asked to make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services, Rochelle Kohn, Beren Campus, 917-326-4828, rkohn1@yu.edu, Abby Kelsen, Wilf Campus, 646-685-0118, akelsen@yu.edu, during the first week of class. After approval for accommodations is granted, please submit your accommodations letter to Disability Services Office immediately.

E-RES (Electronic Reserve)

Most of the articles mentioned in the curriculum are available on electronic reserve [E-RES]. You can access the full text articles from your home or from a university computer at no charge.

How do I Use E-RES?

1. Go to the library's online resources page:

http://www.yu.edu/libraries/online_resources.asp

C:\Documents and Settings\YU\Desktop\SPRING 09 SYLLABI\SWK6191.doc

2. Click on E-RES. If you are off-campus, at this point you will be prompted for your Off Campus Access Service login and password.
3. Click on "Search E-RES" or on "Course Index," and search by instructor's name, department, course name, course number, document title, or document author
4. Click on the link to your course number.
5. Enter the password given to you by your instructor.
6. Locate and click on the item you wish to view. Titles beginning with "A", "An", or "The" are alphabetized under "A" and "T" respectively.
7. When the article text or book record appears on the screen, you can print, email, or save it to disk.

To view documents that are in pdf format, the computer you are using must have Adobe Acrobat Reader software. You can download it FREE
www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Students should attend all classes and be on time. All assigned readings, which can be found on reserve at the library, must be completed before the class in which they will be discussed. This includes readings selected by student presenters which will be emailed to you in advance of each class presentation. Grades are based primarily on the first paper, oral presentation, the final written assignment and class participation, but attendance will also be considered.

GRADING

1. Mid-Term Assignment	30%
2. Final Oral Presentation	50%
4. Class Participation	20%

COURSE OUTLINE

Session 1: Introduction: The Value Base of Jewish Professional Practice

- Definition of a value and the role of Jewish values in shaping Jewish communal service and professional practice.
- Jewish religious texts and traditions and their relationship to the practice of Jewish professional practice.
- How to read a primary text to extrapolate its connection to Jewish communal life and professional practice.
- Review of course syllabus and requirements

Required Reading:

*Bubis, J. (2009). Jewish communal professionals: Jugglers of secular and Jewish value. *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, 84(3-4), 181-193.

Levine, E. (1998). Revisiting the values and ethics of Jewish communal practice. In S. Huberman (Ed.), *Changing Roles and Expectations for the Jewish Communal Professional* (pp. 15-21). Wellington, FL: AJCOP. (handout)

Session 2: Jewish Values that Form the Foundation for a Just and Caring Community.

1. Exploration of some biblical sources that underpin Jewish communal life.

Source: Bible: The Holy Scriptures (and selected Traditional Commentaries)

JPS, Philadelphia, 1917

Genesis 2:18 - (Creation: Adam and Eve)

Genesis 18:1-5 - (Abraham, the Lord and the “guests”)

Exodus 18:13-27 - (Creating a communal Judicial System)

Leviticus 19: 9-10 - (“Gifts” for the poor....)

Leviticus 25:35 - (Your brother becomes poor...)

Deuteronomy 15: 7-11 - (If there is a needy person among you)

Deuteronomy 28: 9 - (walk in His ways.) Along with R. Soloveitchik’s commentary.

Deuteronomy 31:10-12 - (“Hakhel”-“communalize” Law)

Required Reading:

*Praver, J. (1978). *The Jewish community as a force for Jewish continuity: An historical perspective*, Prepared for the International Conference of Jewish Communal Service, August 13-17, 1978.

*Soloveitchik, J.B. (1978). The community. *Tradition*, 17(2), 7-23.

Suggested Reading:

*Lichtenstein, A. (1985). *Jewish values in a world of change: The Role of Jewish Communal Service*. Prepared for the International Conference of Jewish Communal Service, Jerusalem.

Student Assignment for Sessions 3 and 4: Print out the mission and/or vision statements of at least two Jewish communal agencies to be shared in class.

Sessions 3 and 4: Jewish Value Content of Agency Mission and Vision Statements

Session 3:

- Analysis of Jewish values in agency mission and/or vision statements. What they say and what they don’t say....

- Identify the core Jewish values that are the foundations to formulating operational strategies of these contemporary Jewish communal agencies.

Required Reading:

- *Borowitz, E.B., & Schwartz, F.W., (1999). *The Jewish Moral Virtues*. (pp. 41-52). Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society.
- * Ellenson, D. (2006). What makes a Jewish organization “Jewish”. *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, 81 (3/4), 129-132.
- *Soleveitchik, J. B. (1993). Imitating God – The basis of Jewish morality. In A. R. Besdin & J. D. Soleveitchik (Eds.). *Reflections of the Rav: Volume I* (pp. 23-29). NY: Ktav Publishing.

Suggested Reading:

Rosenthal, G. (2005). Tikkun ha-Olam: The metamorphosis of a concept. *The Journal of Religion*, 85 (2), 214-240.

Session 4: Deriving Meaning from Jewish Values for Professional and Communal Life in a Pluralistic Society

First paper due.

- Class discussion of the readings:
 1. Comparison of Praver’s and Soleveitchik’s perspective on community
 2. *Gemilut Chasadim* as the moral foundation for the creation of caring Jewish communities
 3. *Mipnei Darkei Shalom* – Responsibility of Jews to non- Jews
- Coalescence of Jewish and American values in professional practice
- Maintaining a Jewish profile and identity within agencies in a pluralistic society

Required Reading:

- *Katz, J. (2000). *Tradition and Crisis: Jewish society at the end of the middle ages*, trans. Bernard Dov Cooperman, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000) pp. 65-112, 132-140.

Session 5: Jewish Communal Structures: Medieval and Early Modern Periods.

Session 5: The Kehila as the structural model for traditional Jewish communities in the Middle Ages

- Heritage Film series – *Kehila* segment
- Primary Sources: Heritage Reader 139-143, 177-180: (in-class handouts)

The Ethical Wills of Judah Ibn Tibbon and Eleazar of Mainz

Nathan Hanover's Eulogy on the life of Eastern European Jewry

- Organizational structure, leadership and activities of the *Kehila*
- Relationship between the *Kehilot* and larger governmental structures
- Functions of the *Hevrot* (confraternities)

Required Reading:

*Encyclopaedia Judaica, *Hevrah*, Volume 8, pp. 440-442 and *Landsmanschaften*, Volume 10, p. 1414.

Session 6: From the *Kehila* to *Landsmanschaften*

- The growth of *Landsmanschaften* – immigrant benevolent organizations
- Fraternal societies
- Voluntary philanthropic and other communal activities
- Heritage Film Series – Late 19th and Early 20th century immigration to US

Sessions 7-13: Student Presentations on Value content in Jewish Communal Professional Practice.

Session 7: *Tzedakah* – Righteous Giving- Obligations of the Individual to the Community and within Institutional Frameworks

Session 8: *Areyvut* – *Kol Yisrael Areivim Zeh Bazeh* – All Israel is Responsible; One for the Other: The Obligations of Collective Responsibility

Session 9: *Tikkun Olam* – Repairing/Healing the World

Session 10: *Tselem Elokim* – In the Image of G-d/ Uniqueness and Autonomy of the Individual Self

Session 11 and 12: *Gemilut Hasadim* – Acts of Lovingkindness

- *Bikkur Cholim* – Visiting the sick
- *Mipneh Saivah Takum* – Showing respect and caring for the elderly

- *Hachnasat Orchim* – welcoming the stranger and guest
- *Nichum Aveilim* – Comforting the mourners

Session 13: *V'ahavta et Ha'ger* – Loving/Welcoming the Stranger

Session 14: Course Summary and Evaluation

Bibliography

- Barnavi, E. (Ed.). (1992). *A historical atlas of the Jewish people: From the time of the patriarchs to the present*. New York, NY: Schocken Books.
- Bayme, S. (1997). *Understanding Jewish history*. Jersey City, NJ: Ktav.
- Ben-Sasson, H. H. (Ed.). (1976). *A history of the Jewish people*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Biale, D. (2002). *Culture of the Jews: A new history*. New York: Schocken.
- Biale, R. (1984) *Women and Jewish law*. New York, NY. Schocken Books.
- Borowitz, E.B. (1999). *The Jewish moral virtues*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society.
- Chazan, R. (1987) *European Jewry and the first crusade*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Festinger, L. et. al., (1964). *When prophecy fails: A social and psychological study of a modern group that predicted the destruction of the world*. New York, NY: Harper and Row.
- Finkelstein, L. (1990). *The Jews: Their history, culture, and religion*, (4TH ed.). New York, NY: Schocken Books.
- Fox, E. (1999). *Give us a king*. New York: Schocken Books
- Gilbert, M. (1990). *The illustrated atlas of Jewish civilization: 4,000 years of Jewish history*. New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Goldhagen, Daniel J. (1996) *Hitler's willing executioners*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Hallo, W., Ruderman, D., & Stanislawski, M. (Eds.). (1984). *Heritage: Civilization and the Jews source reader*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Hundert, G., ed. (1991) *Essential papers on Hasidism: Origins to present*, New York, NY: New York University Press.
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- Lewis, B. (1984) *The Jews of Islam*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Lipstadt, D. (1994). *Denying the Holocaust: The growing assault on truth and memory*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.
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- Potok, C. (1990). *Wanderings: History of the Jews*. New York, NY: Fawcett Books.
- Sachar, A.L. (1982). *History of the Jews*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Sachar, H. (1996). *A History of Israel: From the rise of Zionism to our time*. New York, NY: Knopf.
- Sarna, J. (2004). *American Judaism: A history*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
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- Seltzer, R. (1980). *Jewish people: Jewish thought: The Jewish experience in history*. New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Zborowski, M., Herzog, E., Mead, M. (2006) *Life is with people*. Madison, CT: International Universities Press.