

Yeshiva College

Department/Program Name: The Robert M. Beren Department of Jewish Studies

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Mission Statement

The Robert M. Beren Department of Jewish Studies serves two main sets of stakeholders: the general Yeshiva College student population and majors in the department. Its mission to all Yeshiva College students is to educate them regarding Jewish civilization from biblical times through the present, to develop their knowledge of and appreciation for the Hebrew language as a vehicle for Jewish culture throughout the ages, and to develop their appreciation for the contexts in which Judaism arose and developed. For majors, its mission is to develop their facility with primary and secondary sources and their independent research skills, and thus prepare them to pursue graduate-level degrees in Jewish Studies.

Student learning goals:

1. Students will be broadly familiar with the sweep of Jewish history.
2. Students will value context as relevant to studying Jewish texts and cultures.
3. Students will appreciate the validity and value of modern academic approaches to Jewish civilization alongside traditional Jewish approaches to the same subjects.
4. Students will have basic facility with the Hebrew language, especially in its classical form in biblical and rabbinic texts.
5. Majors will be able to interact with current discussions in Jewish Studies by drawing on relevant primary evidence to evaluate multiple positions and to construct their own arguments.

Objectives

Department/Program Goal	Objectives
1. Students will be broadly familiar with the sweep of Jewish history.	a. Students can situate personalities, texts and events in relative chronological sequence
	b. Students can explain the significance of key personalities and events in Jewish history
	c. Students have encountered Jewish texts beyond the traditional <i>yeshiva</i> curriculum
2. Students will value context as relevant to studying Jewish texts and cultures	a. Students can analyze a Jewish text in light of contextual evidence.
	b. Students can appraise Jewish civilization's interactions (similarities and differences) with coeval cultural trends.
3. Students will appreciate the validity and value of modern academic approaches to Jewish civilization alongside traditional Jewish approaches to the same subjects.	a. Students have read the same Jewish text (e.g., the Bible, the Talmud, a responsum) traditionally and a the modern academic perspective
	b. Students incorporate traditional Jewish literature into historical discussion
4. Students will have basic facility with the Hebrew language, especially in its classical form in biblical and rabbinic texts.	a. Students can read a previously unseen passage of biblical or classical rabbinic literature with fluidity and comprehension.
	b. Advanced students will be able to express themselves adequately in spoken and written Hebrew.
5. Majors will be able to interact with current discussions in Jewish Studies by drawing on relevant primary evidence, in the original languages, to evaluate multiple positions and to construct their own arguments.	a. Majors can read secondary literature and summarize its argument and the evidence upon which it draws
	b. Majors demonstrate fluency in biblical, rabbinic and modern Hebrew
	c. Majors can sustain a written argument based on primary evidence