



Rav-Hazzan Application Instructions

Admissions Timeline for Rav-Hazzan Ordination Program

Priority application due date	January 15
Interview dates	Mid-January to late March
Financial aid application (including 2015 taxes) and FAFSA due date	Feb. 15
Admissions decisions	Within two weeks of interview
Financial aid award date	Mid April
Accepted student response due date	May 2

If you need an application deadline extension, please contact Rabbi [Daniel Klein](#), director of admissions for the Rabbinical School. We are able to make accommodations on an individual basis, though financial-aid awards may be more limited for late applications.

Application Process

The first step of the application process is to assess whether Hebrew College is the right place for you. We highly recommend you be in touch with Rabbi Klein to begin this process and plan a campus visit.

Once you have decided to apply, you will need to complete an application by Jan. 15. A full application includes the following:

- [Online application form](#)
- Essays I, II and III, submitted as PDF files to admissions@hebrewcollege.edu
- A completed Hebrew preliminary placement exam. Please contact [Rabbi Daniel Klein](#) to request a copy of the exam.
- Official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate studies from accredited academic institutions. Please have official copies of transcripts forwarded directly from the issuing institution to the Office of Admissions, Rabbinical School of Hebrew College, 160 Herrick Rd., Newton Centre, MA, 02459.
- An official score report from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for all foreign students whose native language is not English and who have not received a degree from an accredited United States college or university.
- Three or four letters of reference. To submit a letter of reference electronically, please click [here](#). A printable form may also be downloaded [here \[PDF\]](#), and mailed to the Office of Admissions.
- A non-refundable application fee of \$60 paid by credit card as part of the online application.

Audition and Interview

Qualified applicants are invited to campus for an interview. The interview is an essential and required part of the application process for all Hebrew College graduate degree programs. This is an opportunity for us to get to know you better; you will meet with a committee of faculty and alumni, visit the campus, sit in on classes and meet students; and learn more about the College and the Rabbinical School and COSEL programs.

During your visit to Hebrew College, you will also participate in a vocal audition, and take placement exams in Hebrew and musicianship. Candidates for Shanah Aleph will take an additional Hebrew placement exam.

Interviews take place from mid-January to late March. We will inform you of our admissions decision within two weeks of your interview. For more information and to schedule your interview, audition and placement exams, please contact the Office of Admissions.

Letters of Reference

We strive to consider our applicants as holistically as possible. Recommendations are a crucial part of this process. We want to hear from individuals who know you well and who can offer a view into your academic qualifications, intellectual capacities, personal qualities, Jewish background and/or spiritual journey.

Please include at least one reference from a rabbi, one from an academic source, and one from a cantor or other Jewish professional well-acquainted with your musical and Jewish background. To submit a letter of reference electronically, please click [here](#). A printable form may also be downloaded [here](#), and mailed to the Office of Admissions.

Financial Aid

Information about our financial aid policies may be found [here](#). An application for financial aid does not in any way affect a candidate's application for admission.

Application Essays

Your responses to the following essay questions allow us to get to know you as an individual, a student, a Jew and a future rabbi and cantor. In addition, these essays give you an opportunity to articulate your views on a variety of topics in a relaxed manner. The more frank your essays are, the greater their value will be to the members of the Admissions Committee. We want you to be yourself and honest in your essays

Essay I.

Please write an essay of approximately 1,500-2,000 words, in response to the following:

a. Why have you chosen to become a rabbi and a cantor? Discuss your intellectual, personal and spiritual development, as well as life experiences, specific events and significant relationships that have led you to make this decision. Please include reflections on:

- Your conception of and relationship with God
- The evolution of your current Jewish practice
- Your relationship to the Jewish people and Jewish history, including your relationship with Israel

b. What do you find most compelling and most challenging about training for the rabbinate and cantorate in a pluralistic context?

c. As you imagine yourself both in rabbinical/cantorial school and as a future rabbi and cantor, what are the strengths, weaknesses and fears that you bring with you?

Essay II.

Please answer one of the following questions in 1500 words or less:

1. Reflect on a Torah passage that you have found meaningful or challenging. You may include classical and contemporary commentaries that have been helpful to you in understanding the text.
2. Write a critical review of a book of Jewish or spiritual significance that you have read over the past year. What was significant about this book? Why would you recommend or not recommend it to another reader?

Essay III

Please write an essay of approximately 1000 words on the following:

Read "The Vocation of the Cantor," Chapter 16 in *The Insecurity of Freedom* by Abraham Joshua Heschel. Respond to Heschel's views on the cantorate, prayer and Jewish music. In what ways do you agree or disagree with his assessment?

Application Submission

You may fill out the application by clicking [here](#). After completing the online application, please send Hebrew placement exam and recommendations to dklein@hebrewcollege.edu, or to:

Office of Admissions
Rabbinical School of Hebrew College
Hebrew College
160 Herrick Road
Newton Centre, MA 02459

You are responsible to ensure that all of your application materials are received; we welcome calls or emails from candidates regarding the status of their applications.