



# PROZDOR

The high school of Hebrew College

FALL 2020 COURSE GUIDE



Prozdor is one of Hebrew College's many community education programs for all ages and stages of Jewish learning and enrichment. Prozdor offers a variety of opportunities that encourage teens to incorporate Jewish learning into their busy lives, including Sunday morning learning, service learning, international travel, teen philanthropy, and more. Hebrew College, a Boston-area institution of Jewish learning and leadership, also offers graduate programs in rabbinical, cantorial, education, and Jewish studies, all within a pluralistic environment of open inquiry, depth, creativity, and compassion.



# ACADEMIC CALENDAR

HITORRERUT 9:30-9:45 / PERIOD 1 - 9:45-10:30 / BREAK 10:30-12:40  
PERIOD 2 - 10:40-11:25 / BAYIT - 11:25-11:45 / PERIOD 3 - 11:45 -12:30

*(Subject to change)*

## OCTOBER

Sunday classes	October 18, 25
Opening Day Kick-off	October 18

## NOVEMBER

Sunday classes	November 1, 8, 15, 22*
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## DECEMBER

Sunday classes	December 6, 13, 20
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## JANUARY 2021

Sunday classes	January 10, 17*, 24, 31
Last day of Fall Semester	January 31

## FEBRUARY

Sunday classes	February 7, 21, 28
First day of Spring Semester	February 7

## MARCH

Sunday classes	March 7, 14, 21
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## APRIL

Sunday classes	April 4, 11, 25*
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## MAY

Sunday classes	May 2, 9, 16
12 <sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation	May 16
Closing Day Celebration	May 16

Reaching us during Prozdor Online hours: Please email [prozdor@hebrewcollege.edu](mailto:prozdor@hebrewcollege.edu) or call us at 323-PROZDOR.

# THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Prozdor is a center for Jewish teen learning and engagement, bringing together high school students from diverse communities throughout Greater Boston and beyond to learn and connect within a pluralistic environment of open inquiry, depth, creativity, and compassion. Prozdor's courses, taught by musicians, artists, dancers, scientists, lawyers, doctors, historians, writers, journalists, social activists, and current and future rabbis, offer students an unparalleled breadth and depth of academic choice.

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## STUDENT CHOICE

Every semester we offer a distinct catalogue of engaging and thought-provoking courses so students can pursue their interests and hone their passions as they navigate the landscape of Jewish learning.

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## UNIQUE ACADEMICS

Hebrew College embraces its responsibility for promoting Jewish education for all ages and stages of learners within a pluralistic environment of open inquiry, depth, creativity, and compassion. Our teachers are respectful of all traditions and committed to lifelong learning. They are caring, thoughtful and talented educators who guide and support our students through their Jewish learning journeys.

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## BATIM

At Prozdor, every student (whether attending for two hours or three) is required to attend *Bayit*, a warm, consistent, community-oriented time for teens to form and deepen friendships, explore big questions, discuss current events, reflect on their learning, engage in group challenges, and of course, have a little fun. Each *Bayit* is facilitated by an experienced educator. *Batim* meet after 2<sup>nd</sup> period in a dedicated Zoom room.

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## GRADUATION

Students who attend regularly and participate in courses in good standing will graduate with a Prozdor degree after completing 12th grade.

# HEBREW LANGUAGE AT PROZDOR

Prozdor's Hebrew language curriculum is based on the proficiency approach to teaching Hebrew, a nationally-recognized pedagogy for teaching a foreign language, which emphasizes that each school create its own curriculum based on student needs and interests. Students are consistently evaluated on how they function with the language.

Hebrew language at Prozdor is a longstanding tradition that dates back to the 1920s. In recent years, the Hebrew curriculum at Prozdor has been revised to meet the guidelines of the proficiency approach to language instruction. Using this approach, we have developed various thematic units in order to maximize learning in the classroom and help students take the next step in their mastery of Hebrew learning. All Prozdor Hebrew teachers have been trained in this approach and have participated in a variety of professional development workshops.

We offer Hebrew language classes across different levels, from novice learners to native speakers. While all of our Hebrew classes feature the use of literature, poetry, music, and other Israeli cultural resources, we also offer advanced-level Hebrew classes focused on other topics of study (Bible, Israeli literature, et cetera) in which the only language spoken in class is Hebrew. Students must possess a high degree of Hebrew proficiency to enroll in those classes and must be granted permission by the Hebrew Coordinator to enroll in them.

Upon enrolling in Prozdor, all students wishing to take Hebrew will be asked to take a Hebrew placement test (written and oral), and based on the test, will be matched with the appropriate Hebrew level and class.

## FALL 2020 CLASSES

PERIOD 1 (9:45AM - 10:30AM)

## WHAT CAN THE TALMUD TEACH US ABOUT SOCIAL JUSTICE?

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**Rabbinic Intern Frankie Sandmel, SOCJ002P**

The Early Rabbis lived in a world that was turning upside down, and they were trying to figure out how to rebuild a society that was just and loving. In this class, we'll get a taste of what the Rabbis thought about justice - sharpening our own ideas by wrestling with theirs. Whether you feel like a Talmud expert or you're not even sure what it is, this class will deepen your understanding of the texts that have shaped Judaism for the last 2000 years and push you to think about your own values as you move through the world.

## G!D/GXD/G?D: A STUDY OF THE GOD WE DO OR DON'T BELIEVE IN

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**Rabbi Laura Bellows, THGT011P**

Where and what is God and what role might a divine "hand" have in our lives and in the world? Does God have a body or a gender? In this pluralistic intro to Jewish theology course, we will draw on key sources and thinkers from Torah times to today, along with our own life experiences, as we seek to understand the nature of God, belief, evil, awesomeness, free-will, and the (maybe) afterlife. All beliefs are welcome in this class. Come ready to ask big questions, to be challenged, to listen, and maybe even to find some answers together.

## "JEWISH COOKING" -- WHAT DOES THAT EVEN MEAN? RULES, RECIPES, AND REGULATIONS THAT BIND US TOGETHER (IN THE KITCHEN)

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**Rabbi David Ehrenkranz, LAWS001P**

Why do some Ashkenazic Jews make 'Cholent' but some Sephardic Jews make 'Hamsin'? Why do some Persian Jews use a lot of lemon in their dishes while the Jews of Poland do not? How have the rules and practice of Kashrut (i.e. Kosher laws) impacted what Jews have made in their kitchens? In this course we will explore what we mean when we say "Jewish" cooking or "Jewish" food. Is there such a thing, and if so, what is it? We will be joined by a guest chef or two who will help us learn how to prepare and cook Jewish foods in our respective kitchens (on Zoom). We will also explore and examine the unique traditions of various Jewish families and how those cooking traditions developed.

## AMERICAN PRESIDENTS AND THE JEWS: YOU WON'T BELIEVE THE CONNECTIONS

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**Norm Finkelstein, HIST011P**

In every election year, American Jews reflect on the relationship between them and the person occupying the White House. Historically, nearly every President from George Washington to Donald Trump has had a Jewish connection. Together in this class, we will explore what those connections were and what they meant in their time to Jews, a minority group making its way in America. While some connections will not surprise you, such as Washington's famous letter, other situations, positive and negative surely will. Let's take an unusual but interesting journey together through American presidential history. We will use documents, letters, and video excerpts to piece this story together. Your understanding of the American Presidency will never be the same. [A yearlong course: 1st Semester, 1789-1865: 2nd Semester 1868-2021. Students are welcome to sign up for just one semester.]

## PERIOD 2 (10:40AM - 11:25AM)

## MODERN CONVERSATIONAL HEBREW FOR TEENS (10:40-12:30 - PERIODS 2 AND 3)

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**Mor-Li Hartman, Adva Alpert, Dikla Giladi-Nadler, Shilo Geva, HEBR005P**

Hebrew language at Prozdor is a longstanding tradition dating back to the 1920's. The Hebrew curriculum at Prozdor uses the proficiency approach to language instruction with a unique, teen-oriented curriculum and relevant, real-life topical units that maximize learning in the classroom and help students take the next step in their mastery of Hebrew conversation, writing, and comprehension. We offer Hebrew language classes across different levels, from novice learners to advanced speakers and all of our Hebrew classes feature the use of literature, poetry, music, pop culture, and other Israeli cultural resources. We are excited to be building on our spring semester of online learning to launch a robust and dynamic online Hebrew language learning experience for teens this fall, with the option to receive a transcript that many students include in their college applications.

### **SELFISHNESS VS SELFLESSNESS: HOW DO I KNOW HOW TO BALANCE THEM?**

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**Rabbi David Ehrenkranz, THGT012P**

Every human being struggles with how to balance what they want versus what other people want. And it is not always easy to resolve certain conflicts (parents vs. children, boss vs. employers, citizens vs. government, spouses, teacher vs. student, etc.) We will study Jewish texts and see what our tradition says about when to be selfish and when to be selfless, when to set our needs aside for the many, and when the many need to set aside their needs for the few. This is a complex and nuanced class that is going to require close analysis not only of the text, but a close analysis of who we are, and who we wish to become in the future.

### **LET ME ENTERTAIN YOU: HOW JEWS CREATED AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE**

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**Norm Finkelstein, HIST012P**

Creative Jewish entertainers have been at the center of American cultural and musical life. We began the twentieth century as learners of American culture and ended it as its leading creators. "Return with us now to those thrilling days of yesteryear" as we explore the development of Jewish life in twentieth century America through the lens of American popular culture from Irving Berlin and George Gershwin to Jerry Seinfeld and from "Yid'l Mit'n Fiddle" to "Fiddler on the Roof." Together, through the sharing of sights and sounds in class we will take an entertaining and informative journey through a century of Jewish contributions to American music, theater, film, radio and television. Successful completion of this course guarantees students the ability to confidently enjoy shared reminiscences of the "good old days" with grandparents and other older acquaintances.

### **MODERN HEBREW AND ISRAELI POETRY: MAKING OUR TEXTS OUR OWN**

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**Rabbinic Intern Rafi Ellenson, ARTS005P**

Both the revival of the Hebrew language in the 19th Century and the establishment of the state of Israel has allowed for a massive burst of creativity in our Jewish textual tradition. Poets from Bialik to Rachel, Amichai to Wallach, and more were all keen to explore Jewish history within the borders of Modern Hebrew and the culture of the new Jewish state. In translation, we will read these poets and more, including poets from Israel's minority populations, and learn how they used Jewish history and texts to examine their own lives. In addition to discussing poetry and translation, there will also be opportunities to write original poetry.

### **PERIOD 3 (11:45AM - 12:30PM)**

### **MODERN CONVERSATIONAL HEBREW FOR TEENS (10:40-12:30 - PERIODS 2 AND 3)**

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## HEBR005P Continued

Mor-Li Hartman, Adva Alpert, Dikla Giladi-Nadler, Shilo Geva

This is a continuation; see description under Period 2.

## PANDEMICS, EPIDEMICS, AND ISOLATION IN JEWISH HISTORY: HOW JEWISH COMMUNITIES DEALT WITH THE PLAGUE AND OTHER DISASTERS

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Rabbi David Ehrenkranz, HIST013P

Throughout human history there have been a number of pandemics and epidemics that deeply impacted us. The Antonine Plague (also known as the Plague of Galen, 165-180 C.E.) Cyprian Plague (3rd century), the Plague of Justinian (6th century), the Cholera epidemics of the 17th, 18th & 19th centuries, and our current Coronavirus Pandemic are just a few we will examine. We will focus on how the various Jewish communities throughout history reacted to these pandemics and what we have learned from the various reactions different communities took to maintain the safety and security of their people. We will also explore what Judaism has to say about how to react spiritually, ethically and morally to calamities and catastrophes that come our way. We will also discuss if there is a way we can prevent future pandemics. And if we are meticulous in analyzing our data, we will collectively send our findings to the CDC and The White House.

## ONE PEOPLE, TWO PATHS: THE JEWS OF ISRAEL AND THE UNITED STATES

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Norm Finkelstein, HIST014P

Although sharing a similar heritage, beliefs and history, Israeli and American Jews are shaped by unique experiences which define who they are, how they live and what they think. In this course we will look at the evolution of the two societies from 1950 - 2021. For example, while the Civil Rights Movement occupied American Jewish thought in the 1950s and 1960s, Israelis faced life-threatening wars. Together we will share readings, video/film selections and class discussions. We will also explore specific experiences which have shaped both cultures. Some questions we will study include: 1. Who are the American Jews and how do they differ from Israeli Jews? 2. How does the American experience shape our views of Israel? 3. What are the cultural factors that influence us as Americans and Israelis?

## JEWS & WHITENESS: EXPLORING IDENTITY, DIVERSITY, AND RACISM

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Rabbinic Intern Frankie Sandmel, SOCJ003P

In this class, no question is too big or small and all identities and experiences are welcome. We'll look into the roots and realities of anti-Semitism and racism - how they overlap, where they diverge, and how we each individually are impacted by them. Through historical, contemporary, and creative sources, we'll wrestle together with some of the big questions of our diverse Jewish community and world: what is the relationship between Jews and whiteness? What is intersectionality? What does it mean to look or act "Jewish" (and who decides)? And where do our own stories fit into this complex landscape of privilege and oppression?



# Leadership and Community Engagement

## Opportunities for Prozdor students

### JEWISH TEEN FOUNDATION OF GREATER BOSTON (JTFGB)

The Jewish Teen Foundation for Greater Boston is a Hebrew College program that teaches teenagers about fundraising, civic leadership, grant-making, and collective giving; and helps them partner with non-profits to make a difference.

Participants are divided into boards that work together to pick an issue area, research nonprofits that connect to that issue area, and send requests for proposals to those organizations. Teens conduct local or virtual site visits to organizations, learn about fundraising from industry leaders, and raise donations before choosing organizations to receive their funding. Through the process, teens learn about philanthropy through a Jewish lens, while gaining new leadership skills and building community.

Since the program's inception in 2015, teen participants have raised over \$200,000 and distributed 30 grants to organizations that focus on mental health, substance abuse, access to education, sexual assault, domestic violence, immigration and refugees, child abuse and trafficking, poverty, and more.

The program is open to teens from across the Greater Boston Jewish community. Meetings take place one Sunday each month at Hebrew College. There are a limited number of spots remaining on the 2020-2021 boards. Please contact Leah Goldstein at [lgoldstein@hebrewcollege.edu](mailto:lgoldstein@hebrewcollege.edu) for more information or to nominate an exceptional teen.

*JTFGB is part of an Incubator program within the Jewish Teen Funders Network and received generous funding during its first four years from Laura Lauder and The Maimonides Fund. The program continues to receive funding from local donors and a matching grant with CJP and the Jim Joseph Foundation.*

### GATEWAYS VOLUNTEERING

The Gateways Sunday Program offers a thematic Jewish education curriculum to students ages 5-18 who benefit from highly structured programming, individualized attention and small class sizes. Special education teachers present a multisensory curriculum that includes Jewish holidays, Torah stories, and Hebrew, as well as Jewish culture and traditions.

Each year, select Prozdor students dedicate two hours of their Sunday morning to volunteering at the Sunday Program student volunteers receive training and weekly check-ins with the special educators to increase their skills and effectiveness in supporting children with special needs.

Classes take place on Sundays online this fall.

The Gateways application process is facilitated through the Gateways office. If you are accepted as a Sunday volunteer and wish to receive the two hours of credit for your work with Gateways, you must be officially enrolled as a student in Prozdor. For more information, or to apply to be a volunteer in the Gateways Sunday Program, please email Sandy Gold at [sandyg@jgateways.org](mailto:sandyg@jgateways.org).

Students volunteers are selected in late summer.

# HEBREW COLLEGE OFFERS JEWISH LEARNING FOR EVERY AGE AND STAGE

Our community programs for teens and adults include:

**PROZDOR** (8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade)

**JEWISH TEEN FOUNDATION OF GREATER BOSTON** (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade)

**TEEN BEIT MIDRASH** (8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade)

**GESHER ISRAEL SEMINAR** (10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade)

**PROZDOR IMMERSIVES** (7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade)

**YOUNG ADULT LEARNING: OPEN CIRCLE JEWISH LEARNING AND ESER** (20s and 30s)

**PARENTING THROUGH A JEWISH LENS** (For parents of young children, tweens, teens, and grandparents)

**OPEN CIRCLE JEWISH LEARNING** (Discussion-based learning)

**ME'AH CLASSIC & SELECT** (100 hours of Jewish learning and semester-long classes)

**RABBINICAL, CANTORIAL, AND GRADUATE EDUCATION COURSES** (Select courses are open to the community on a non-credit basis)

**HEBREW LANGUAGE ULPAN** (Intensive Hebrew language courses)



Hebrew college is a Boston-area institution of Jewish learning and leadership that offers graduate programs in rabbinical, cantorial, education, and Jewish studies, and community learning programs for all ages and stages within a pluralistic environment of open inquiry, depth, creativity, and compassion.

For more information visit: [hebrewcollege.edu/community-learning](https://hebrewcollege.edu/community-learning)