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# TEEN LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

WINTER & SPRING 2021

# TEEN LEARNING

## PROZDOR: WHERE JEWISH TEENS THRIVE

**Program Information:** [hebrewcollege.edu/prozdor](http://hebrewcollege.edu/prozdor)

**Register:** [hebrewcollege.edu/learn](http://hebrewcollege.edu/learn)

**Contact:** Laura Bellows | [lbellows@hebrewcollege.edu](mailto:lbellows@hebrewcollege.edu)



Jewish teens in eighth through twelfth grades have been studying Judaic and Hebrew studies together at Prozdor since the 1920s, graduating more than 5,000 students. This fall, we are moving our vibrant learning community online and invite teens from near and far to join us. Prozdor remains a central hub for teen Jewish learning, Modern Hebrew, and lasting community.

Prozdor meets from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. most Sundays. A Hebrew-only option meets from 10:40 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Tuition for Spring 2021 semester is \$1,400 (three classes or one class plus Hebrew); \$1000 (two classes or Hebrew only); \$500 (one class). Financial aid and discounts are available. Classes start February 7, 2021. Students can choose from the courses below.

### FIRST PERIOD PROZDOR COURSES

#### DEEP DIVE INTO JEWISH TIME: WHAT STORIES AND HISTORIES ANIMATE OUR CALENDAR?

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**Instructor:** Frankie Sandmel

Sundays, 9:45-10:30 a.m., February-May

*From the smallest scale—hour-by-hour—to the time span of our lives, Judaism is all about time. In this class, we'll travel through time—diving deep into the rhythm, ritual, and stories of the Jewish calendar. We will look beyond the common understandings of the holidays to explore the origins and history of these epic days, how they connect to one another, how the calendar was influenced by neighboring cultures, and some of the many ways to understand and travel through Jewish time.*

#### WOMEN PROPHETS: THEIR UNIQUE POWER, INSIGHT AND LEADERSHIP

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**Instructor:** Rabbi David Ehrenkranz

Sundays 9:45-10:30 a.m., February-May

*In this course we will examine the uniqueness of the female prophet and see how her insights are full of truth, integrity, and foresight. We will also see how men, both in the ancient world and now, underestimated these women to the detriment of themselves as well as the society in general. Some of the prophetesses that we will study will be: Sarah, Rivka, Devorah, Chuldah, Esther, as well as some others you may not be familiar with.*

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

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**Instructor:** Norm Finkelstein

Sundays, 9:45-10:30 a.m., February-May

*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. This is a one-year course, but new students are most welcome this semester as we continue our journey beginning with Abraham Lincoln and moving on to Joe Biden.*

## SECOND PERIOD PROZDOR COURSES

### MODERN CONVERSATIONAL HEBREW FOR TEENS

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**Instructors: Mor-Li Hartman, Dikla Giladi, Adva Alpert, and Shilo Geva**  
Sundays, 10:40 a.m.-12:30 p.m., February-May

*Hebrew language at Prozdor is a longstanding tradition dating back to the 1920s. The Hebrew curriculum at Prozdor uses the proficiency approach to language instruction with a unique, teen-orientated 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 our Hebrew classes feature the use of literature, poetry, music, pop culture, and other Israeli cultural resources. Students have the option to receive a transcript, which many students include in their college applications.*

### WHY DOES GOD FEEL THE NEED TO TEST US?

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**Instructor: Rabbi David Ehrenkranz**  
Sundays, 10:40 a.m.-11:25 p.m., February-May

*In this course we will try to understand why anyone in this world needs to be tested by God. Since God clearly knows what our capabilities are, why the need for tests at all? Whom do these tests benefit? Do we, in fact, have to take them? What happens if we fail? And can we test God? These are some of the topics we will discuss during the semester.*

### LET'S READ OTHER PEOPLE'S MAIL: PERSONAL GLIMPSES INTO THE AMERICAN JEWISH EXPERIENCE

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**Instructor: Norm Finkelstein**  
Sundays, 10:40 a.m.-11:25 p.m., February-May

*Of course, it's not polite to read other people's mail. But don't worry. The writers of the letters we will read and discuss will not mind. Through their words we will relive important moments in the over 350-year history of Jews in America. You will recognize the names of some of the writers: others will not be familiar. Each week we will examine a different letter to give us a personal contemporary look into an event or timeframe which affected the American Jewish community.*

## ARTIST BEIT MIDRASH: CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

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**Instructor: Rabbi Laura Bellows**

Sundays, 10:40 a.m.-11:25 p.m., February-May

*From disgruntled ravens to backwards rivers to ancient escapes, Jewish textual tradition is full of magical realist and all-too-real stories of miracles, wonders, and strange curiosities. In this class we will study tales from classical Midrash and Talmud (in English and/or Hebrew, as students prefer) and then take our learning and writing to the next level with creative prompts to help us respond to the text and craft our own modern midrashim.*

## THIRD PERIOD PROZDOR COURSES

### SAFE AND AFRAID: AMERICAN JEWS DURING THE HOLOCAUST ERA

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**Instructor: Norm Finkelstein**

Sundays 11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m., February-May

*When the Nazis came to power in Germany, Jews in the United States reacted with horror. But what could they do? Themselves targets of a vocal anti-Semitism in the 1920s and 1930s, they faced a dilemma: actively and publicly protest Nazi plans as Peter Bergson and his group did or engage in quiet diplomacy as advocated by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise. Some say American Jews could have done more to save the Jews of Europe. Others say that they did what they could, given the times. In this class we will look back at news accounts, film excerpts and primary documents to analyze their choices. Some questions we will explore include: (1) How did the Holocaust affect American Jews during and after the era? (2) Could American Jews have done more to influence the American government to do more to save Europe's Jews? (3) What were the political, economic, and social conditions of American Jews in the 1930s and 1940s?*

### DREAMS, ACCORDING TO JUDAISM, PSYCHOLOGY, AND BIOLOGY

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**Instructor: Rabbi David Ehrenkranz**

Sundays 11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m., February-May

*In this course we will explore the nature of dreams from a variety of perspectives and will try to see if we can unify the different theories of the purpose and function of dreams. We will see how the Rabbis debated the significance of dreams (in some cases to the point of asking if dreams can affect Jewish Law). We will examine a variety of psychological approaches from early psychoanalysis to modern day therapy. We will also look at how our unique biological makeup can have our dreams affect us differently.*

# GESHER ISRAEL SEMINAR

**Program Information:** [hebrewcollege.edu/teens](http://hebrewcollege.edu/teens)

**Register by January 20:** [hebrewcollege.edu/gesher-israel-registration](http://hebrewcollege.edu/gesher-israel-registration)

**Contact:** Laura Bellows | [lbellow@hebrewcollege.edu](mailto:lbellow@hebrewcollege.edu)

A discussion-driven, Israel studies seminar for motivated 10th-12th graders, in partnership with The Tent at Temple Israel. Led by expert Israel educator-facilitator, Jonathan Golden, we will gather once a month to explore Israeli culture, history, identity, social issues, and current events and to develop the skills and knowledge to engage in nuanced discussion about Israel. Meets on Zoom, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. monthly. All ideas, opinions, and perspectives welcome. Financial aid is available.

**Instructors:** *Jonathan Golden, Fallon Rubin, and Rabbi Laura Bellows*

*Sundays, 12:30-2 p.m., January 24, February 28, March 21, April 11, May 16*

*\$175*

# TEEN BEIT MIDRASH

**Program information:** [hebrewcollege.edu/programs/teen-beit-midrash/](http://hebrewcollege.edu/programs/teen-beit-midrash/)

**Register:** [hebrewcollege.edu/learn](http://hebrewcollege.edu/learn)

**Contact:** Rabba Claudia Marbach | [cmarbach@hebrewcollege.edu](mailto:cmarbach@hebrewcollege.edu)

Hebrew College Teen Beit Midrash (TBM) is an intimate and challenging program for teens in eighth through twelfth grades of all denominations who are looking for a pluralistic and inclusive place to explore their identity as a Jews and deepen their knowledge. Founded by Hebrew College alumna Rabbi Shahar Colt, the program brings together a dedicated and diverse group of Jewish teens who are excited to delve into traditional Talmudic text and find contemporary meaning relevant to our lives. We open the library of our Jewish heritage to help teens understand our multi-voiced, nuanced tradition and gain the skills to reach their own conclusions. Talmud study enables us to hone our reasoning and persuasive argument skills that are applicable to all aspects of our lives. Together, we study, share dinner together, build community and learn and have fun. Together, we study, share dinner (when in person), build community, learn seriously, and have fun. Financial aid is available.

*Tuesdays, 7-8:30 p.m., February-May*

*\$1,200*

# JEWISH TEEN FOUNDATION OF GREATER BOSTON (JTTFGB)

**Program information:** [hebrewcollege.edu/jtfgb](http://hebrewcollege.edu/jtfgb)  
**Register:** [hebrewcollege.edu/learn](http://hebrewcollege.edu/learn)  
**Contact:** Leah Goldstein | [lgoldstein@hebrewcollege.edu](mailto:lgoldstein@hebrewcollege.edu)

JTTFGB is a year-long program for Jewish ninth through twelfth-grade students from across the Greater Boston Area to develop strong leadership and communication skills, dive deep into Jewish values-driven decision making, learn the ins and outs of professional philanthropy and grant-making through a Jewish lens, and allocate grants to effect real change in the issue areas they care about most. During the first five years of the program, teens have raised almost \$270,000 and awarded 40 grants to organizations that fight issues such as child abuse and sexual assault, support refugees, education inequity, environmental justice, mental health, and poverty, among several other causes.

*Sundays, every 3-4 weeks, October-June*  
*Applications for 2021-22 will open in April*  
*\$400*

# PROZDOR IMMERSIVE: DAYS OF DEEP-DIVE LEARNING

Join 7th-12th graders and parents from near and far for a dive deep into one of six immersive workshops, from cooking to ethical debates, arts to social justice, tech to innovation. Prozdor Immersives offer pop-up learning only three times during the year (November 22, January 17, and April 25) and participants may join us for one, two, or all three days, and for as many workshops as they wish. April workshop topics, descriptions, and registration will be available online in March.

**Program information:** [hebrewcollege.edu/prozdor-immersives](http://hebrewcollege.edu/prozdor-immersives)  
**Contact:** Laura Bellows | [lbellows@hebrewcollege.edu](mailto:lbellows@hebrewcollege.edu)

**Next Immersive Day of Learning: Sunday, April 25**  
\$36 for a household, \$25 for an individual

# HEBREW COLLEGE OFFERS JEWISH LEARNING FOR EVERY AGE AND STAGE

Our community programs for teens and adults include:

PROZDOR (middle and high school)

PROZDOR IMMERSIVES (middle and high school)

JEWISH TEEN FOUNDATION OF GREATER BOSTON (high school)

GESHER ISRAEL (high school)

TEEN BEIT MIDRASH (middle and high school)

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

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

OPEN CIRCLE JEWISH LEARNING (Discussion-based learning and social action programs)

ME'AH CLASSIC (100 hours of Jewish learning at the college level)

ME'AH SELECT (Semester-long learning at the college level)

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)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (Congregational Education Initiative, Hebrew at the Center, and more)



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Hebrew College is an innovative national institute for Jewish learning and leadership based in Newton, Massachusetts. We are dedicated to Jewish literacy, creativity, and community, and a world of dignity and compassion for all. Our students are future rabbis, cantors, and educators, and people at every stage of life who love to learn. Together, we are infusing Jewish life with substance, spirit, beauty, imagination, and a sense of purpose.