

# Jewish Studies Expansion Program

2008-2010 Pilot Cohort Evaluation

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Submitted to the Foundation for Jewish Culture by Tobin Belzer PhD  
July 2010

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Foundation for Jewish Culture's Jewish Studies Expansion Program (JSEP) was established based on the understanding that Jewish studies courses have potential to attract students who might not otherwise engage in Jewish campus life. JSEP is designed to provide increased opportunities for Jewish learning and engagement at universities that have relatively large Jewish student populations, but only limited ability to offer Jewish studies courses and related extracurricular activities. During the 2008-2010 academic years, six universities – American, Northeastern, Ohio, Towson, and Tulane Universities, as well as the University of Delaware -- were each awarded funding for a two-year postdoctoral teaching fellowship in Jewish studies. The pilot phase of JSEP was supported by a grant from the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation (CLSFF).

This report is the culmination of an 18-month evaluative process. Based on multiple data sources including surveys, interviews, participant observation and analysis of primary documents, this research reveals the numerous successes of the program and offers recommendations to address the challenges. In the pilot phase, JSEP has had a significant impact on the participating universities' course offerings, students, Fellows, and Jewish studies programs.

## Jewish Studies Courses

Every university successfully expanded the number and breadth of Jewish studies courses and increased the number of students enrolled. JSEP's enrollment goal for the 2008-2010 Fellowship period was 1350 students. The actual enrollment numbers exceeded that goal: 1456 students took Fellows' courses. Fellows taught a total of 52 courses, increasing the variety of learning opportunities available to students. Student interest was apparent at each university: when more courses were offered, students enrolled.

## Students

Students offered overwhelmingly positive feedback about their experience in Fellows' courses. The learning experience stimulated students' interest in Jewish studies on both academic and personal levels. The courses added depth to students' prior knowledge, exposed some to content that was completely new to them and helped others clarify misconceptions. Both Jewish and non-Jewish students were motivated to reflect on their ethnic and religious identities. Jewish students felt a renewed sense of pride and connection to their Jewish identities. Some were motivated to increase their Jewish observance and participate in Jewish campus life and some felt more connected to Israel. The courses engendered students' interest in learning more about their own heritage and enrolling in additional Jewish studies courses.

## Jewish Studies Programs

The visibility of Jewish studies programs increased as a result of Fellows' extracurricular efforts. Fellows planned large and small-scale events, both on campus and off, which were open to the university and local communities. During the granting period, Fellows organized and participated in

more than 50 extracurricular events related to Jewish studies. Every Fellow produced a least one event that was attended by more than 100 students and community members. Jewish studies directors, students, and the Fellows themselves described how they became “the face of Jewish studies.”

### Fellows’ Growth and Contributions

JSEP provided Fellows with hands-on learning opportunities, practical skill building, and mentoring. Fellows gained invaluable teaching experience: they developed syllabi, taught classes of different sizes, and managed heavy course loads. They gained experience navigating departmental dynamics and university bureaucracies. Fellows proved to be valuable resources: they were compelling and popular teachers, competent administrators, effective event planners and valued colleagues.

### CONSIDERATIONS FOR ADVANCING PROGRAM GOALS

The findings in this report raise issues for consideration that emerged during JSEP’s two-year pilot phase. The Foundation has already made a number of programmatic and policy related adjustments based on lessons learned from two mid-course evaluation reports (submitted in June and December 2009). What follows are issues for consideration, along with details about the changes JSEP has already instituted. Additionally, recommendations to further advance program goals are offered based on issues that surfaced during the second year of the pilot phase.

#### TO FORWARD THE GOAL OF:

##### 1. Expanding the number and breadth of Jewish studies courses.

Fellows taught differing numbers of courses, some of which were new, others that had been recently taught by adjuncts, and still others that had not been taught for some time. Some Fellows taught the same courses repeatedly. Based on this mid-course finding, a recommendation was made to explicitly articulate expectations about the minimum number of new courses and the maximum number of repeat courses Fellows should teach. To address this issue, the 2010-2012 Fellowship agreement includes the requirement that Fellows teach two courses per academic term, with adjustments in teaching load possible in consultation with the Foundation. Of the eight courses, at least four are required to be new. With increased specificity around these expectations, the courses taught are likely to more effectively forward the goals of the Fellowship while addressing the needs of the Jewish studies programs.

##### 2. Increasing the number of Jewish students enrolled in Jewish studies courses

When courses fulfill a requirement for graduation, enrollments are typically higher. Because of mid-course recommendations, second cohort Fellows are obligated to teach at least four courses that fulfill a general or core course requirement. Additionally, each Jewish studies program is expected to provide regular reports detailing: the courses taught by the Fellow, enrollment figures, and related marketing efforts.

Findings from the current report also suggest:

- In order to obtain course designation in a timely manner, Jewish studies programs should anticipate the bureaucratic processes necessary to qualify Fellows' courses for requirement eligibility.
- Word of mouth is a powerful mode of publicity that should be cultivated as much as possible. Since both Jewish and non-Jewish students spoke positively about their experiences in Jewish studies, targeted efforts to recruit both Jewish and non-Jewish students should be employed.
- Advertising through flyers and email proved largely ineffective. These efforts should either be refined or discontinued.

### 3. Engendering students' Jewish connections and community during their undergraduate experience.

Fellows' courses motivated students' interest in taking additional courses in Jewish studies and exploring their heritage. Some Jewish students were motivated to become involved in Jewish life on campus and participate in Israel advocacy. Additionally, a small number of students became involved in Jewish student groups that were organized by Fellows. Some Fellows were uncomfortable with what they perceived as the expectation that they facilitate outreach to Jewish students.

To ensure that in-coming Fellows are fully apprised of the obligations of their position, the universities have been asked to make the Foundation's goals and expectations unambiguous. The Foundation also requested that participating universities "take into consideration the aptitude, experience and/or interest in Jewish cultural programming" during the hiring process.

To enable more effective assessment of the extent to which this goal is being met, the Foundation should:

- Consider more specifically articulating the meaning of "engendering students' Jewish connections and community."

### 4. Increasing the visibility of the Jewish studies programs

Fellows organized a wide variety of events for diverse audiences in many types of venues. Some Fellows made this aspect of the Fellowship more central than others. Every Fellow produced original events and some were tasked with organizing existing programming. Many Fellows partnered with other departments, faculty members, and Hillel to expand the reach of their programs. Many also drew upon cultural resources from the Foundation.

Responding to the recommendation that the Foundation consider developing guidelines regarding the extent and type of engagement efforts preferred, Fellows are now required to organize a minimum of four Jewish studies related cultural events per academic year, in consultation with his or her mentor. Also, Fellows are expected to work with students outside the classroom and to be available for public lectures on campus and in the wider academic community. To address inconsistencies in the amount of time Fellows devoted to their programming efforts during the pilot phase, the Foundation recommends that: "Fellows spend a minimum of 20 hours per semester in the development and execution of Jewish cultural programming." The Foundation has agreed to help Fellows create and execute cultural programs by making the JSEP program director's time and resources available to them.

The following should also be considered:

- Clarify expectations around the extent to which Fellows are required to create original programming (as opposed to taking over the administration of programs' existing lecture series).
- Consider more explicitly articulating a goal related to Fellows' utilization of resources funded by the Foundation for Jewish Culture.
- Explicitly encourage Fellow's to strategically leverage relationships with other faculty and organizations to broaden the reach of their cultural programming. Since many Jewish studies programs are recipients of multiple Fellowships simultaneously, Fellows should proactively capitalize on such possibilities for synergy.

#### 5. Provide junior scholars with opportunities to hone their teaching skills and develop their academic careers.

Fellows gained valuable skills from the teaching and professional development opportunities provided to them. Every Fellow valued the opportunity to connect with one another. Some benefited from the mentoring experience more than others. Since Fellows took on administrative roles to varying extents, some were afforded time to work on their own scholarship during the granting period while others were not.

The Foundation has already begun to address the challenge of uneven mentoring in three significant ways. First, when selecting universities for the second cohort, the importance a Jewish studies director who can act as a suitable mentor was taken into account. Secondly, expectations regarding mentoring were clearly delineated to both Fellows and mentors at the May 2010 second cohort retreat. Finally, the Fellowship agreement states that universities are obligated to appoint a suitable senior scholar to act as a mentor for the Fellow. The agreement also delineates expectations about the mentors' responsibilities. Mentors are required to: conduct two classroom visits per semester to provide feedback about the Fellow's teaching, review the Fellow's syllabi, and agree to foster a supportive and accessible mentoring experience for the Fellow. Additionally, guidelines have been established regarding the extent of Fellows' administrative responsibilities.

The following recommendations should also be considered:

- In addition to ensuring that each Fellow has a suitable mentor, probable challenges such as personnel changes should be anticipated.
- Continue to support networking among first cohort Fellows and facilitate connections between Fellows in the first and second cohorts.
- Since publications are essential to the success of an emerging scholar, provide Fellows with funding to support their research during the summer. With that support in place, they can more fully focus on teaching and community building during the school year. At the retreats, encourage discussion among Fellows about the connections between their teaching and research interests.

## 6. Connect university and private funders in their efforts to promote further Jewish studies opportunities.

With the current economic climate, private funding is the most realistic possibility for expanding Jewish studies at this time.

- Offer Jewish studies directors training and support so they can acquire the skills necessary to be effective fundraisers.
- University-backed support of Jewish studies expansion must include the active participation of each school's development and advancement offices.
- Consider requiring programs to periodically report their fundraising efforts.

## 7. Help launch certificates and minors in Jewish studies and lay the groundwork for an additional faculty line in Jewish studies.

There are numerous challenges to achieving this goal, including: the limited timeframe of the grant, the current economic climate, and the politics surrounding university hiring.

- Consider redirecting the focus away from efforts to ensure institutional buy-in, and instead intensify efforts to obtain private funds.
- Since achieving this goal within the time frame of the grant is unrealistic for most Jewish studies programs, benchmarks should be articulated to measure the progress and process of these efforts.
- Jewish studies directors need guidance about how to effectively expand Jewish studies programs. Connecting them with directors who have been successful at such efforts would be beneficial.

During the pilot phase, JSEP successfully increased opportunities for Jewish learning and engagement. JSEP's success is evident in the expanded number of courses, variety of topics taught, increased enrollments, and quantity of events produced. Additionally, students' high level of engagement and interest, along with Fellows' positive experiences of professional development, attest to the strength of the program.

With the programmatic and policy changes that have been implemented, JSEP has begun to benefit from the lessons of the pilot cohort. As it moves forward, JSEP promises to continue to attract new students to Jewish studies, boost the careers of emerging scholars, and increase the visibility of Jewish studies on campuses that have relatively large Jewish student populations, but only limited ability to offer Jewish studies courses and related extracurricular activities. Through these efforts, the seeds of Jewish studies expansion will continue to grow.

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## Introduction

The Foundation for Jewish Culture's Jewish Studies Expansion Program (JSEP) was established based on the understanding that Jewish studies courses have potential to attract students who might not otherwise engage in Jewish campus life. A study by Jack Ukeles et al., identified students with low levels of Jewish identification, but curiosity about what it means to be Jewish as "ambivalents".<sup>1</sup> Ambivalent students are likely to be among the 55% of Jewish students that Amy Sales and Len Saxe identified as having minimal or no connection to Jewish student organizations.<sup>2</sup> They are also likely to be a part of the 45% of all Jewish undergraduates who Sales and Saxe identified as likely to take at least one Jewish studies course before they graduate. The Jewish Studies Expansion Program was created to benefit such students by expanding Jewish studies at universities where programs are under-resourced.

JSEP is designed to increase opportunities for Jewish learning and engagement at universities that have relatively large Jewish student populations, but only limited ability to offer Jewish studies courses and related extracurricular activities. The pilot phase of JSEP was supported by a grant from the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation (CLSFF).

Six universities – American, Northeastern, Ohio, Towson, and Tulane Universities, as well as the University of Delaware -- were each awarded funding for a two-year postdoctoral teaching Fellow in Jewish studies. The universities qualified for the grant based on a number of characteristics, including: 300 or more Jewish undergraduates, a limited ability to offer a variety of Jewish studies courses, and no more than two full time faculty members whose teaching is dedicated to Jewish studies. Each university also demonstrated student interest and institutional support for Jewish studies expansion. Additionally, each made a financial commitment by participating in a matching grant process with the Schusterman Family Foundation.

JSEP aims to accomplish the following goals:

1. To expand the number and breadth of Jewish studies courses.
2. To increase the number of Jewish students enrolled in Jewish studies courses.
3. To engender students' Jewish connections and community during their undergraduate experience.
4. To increase the visibility of the Jewish studies programs.
5. To provide junior scholars with opportunities to hone their teaching skills and develop their academic careers.
6. To connect university and private funders in their efforts to promote further Jewish studies opportunities.
7. To help launch certificates and minors in Jewish studies and lay the groundwork for an additional faculty line in Jewish studies.

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<sup>1</sup> Jacob B. Ukeles, Ron Miller and Pearl Beck, Young Jewish Adults in the United States Today (New York: The American Jewish Committee, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Amy L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, Particularism in the University: Realities and Opportunities for Jewish Life on Campus (Waltham: Brandeis University, Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, 2006).

JSEP employs a multi-faceted strategy to strengthen and diversify the participating Jewish studies programs. The addition of a postdoctoral teaching Fellow enables the participating Jewish studies programs to offer a greater variety of courses and appeal to a wider range of students, thereby increasing course enrollment. For Jewish students, courses have potential to provide new avenues through which to explore and connect with their Jewish identities. For all students – both Jewish and non-Jewish – JSEP provides increased opportunities to learn about Jewish culture, history, and thought.

To enhance the visibility of Jewish studies on campus, each Fellow is given a small stipend to organize lectures or other scholarly events. By generating greater interest in Jewish studies, JSEP aims to help programs become better positioned to develop and grow opportunities for students to earn Jewish studies certificates and minors. Through these efforts, programs could potentially garner increased attention and support from their universities and local Jewish communities. Ideally, demonstrating student interest will enable programs to generate the funding to hire a full-time faculty member in Jewish studies.

JSEP is designed to empower and support the Fellows. Fellows are given the opportunity to develop course syllabi and hone their pedagogical skills. In addition to practical experience, each Fellow is paired with a faculty mentor at his or her university. Fellows and mentors gather four times over the course of their two-year appointments for retreats and meetings designed to enable resource sharing and skill building, while fostering collegiality. By helping to groom individuals who are emerging as the next generation of Jewish intellectual leaders, JSEP aims to impact the field of Jewish studies more broadly.

This study is the culmination of an 18-month evaluative process. The evaluation was designed to examine how and if short-term goals are being met, and explore the extent to which the groundwork to accomplish long-term goals is being developed. The research draws upon multiple data sources, including: bi-annual surveys of Fellows' students; interviews with each Fellow near the beginning, middle and end of the granting period; interviews with Fellows' mentors during each academic year; interviews with other key stakeholders (i.e. Jewish studies directors, Hillel directors, deans, development officers, and invested faculty members); participant observation during site visits to each campus; final reports submitted by mentors; and analysis of primary documents such as Jewish studies programs' websites, listserves, print materials, and posters.

This report provides an overview of the implementation and impact of JSEP's pilot cohort in six sections. The first section discusses the details of the Jewish studies courses offered by the Fellows. It includes a demographic description of the students who enrolled. The second section discusses the impact on the students. They offer their impressions of the quality of the instructors and the courses overall. This section also describes the ways in which students articulated how the courses affected their thinking and behavior. The third section focuses on the impact of the JSEP experience on the Jewish studies programs in terms of increased visibility. The fourth section describes the impact on the Fellows. The fifth section discusses the immediate outcomes of JSEP on each campus and for each Fellow. The final section presents conclusions and recommendations for advancing the program goals during the second cohort.

## 1. Jewish Studies Courses and Students

In the pilot phase, every university successfully expanded the number and breadth of Jewish studies courses and increased enrollments in Jewish studies courses. JSEP's enrollment goal for the 2008-2010 Fellowship period was 1350 students. The actual enrollment numbers exceeded that goal: 1456 students took Fellows' courses. Student interest was apparent at each university: when more courses were offered, students enrolled.

Fellows taught a total of 52 courses, increasing the variety of learning opportunities available to students. The annual number of courses available at each school increased as much as 166% (Table 1). The most dramatic increase took place at Ohio University. The year before the arrival of the Fellow, between 2-3 courses were taught. During the granting period, the Fellow taught a total of 11 courses. He was the first and only full time faculty member in Jewish studies on that campus.

Table 1: Increases in Jewish Studies Course Offerings

University	Total Number of Courses Taught by Fellows	Percentage Increase in the Total Number of Courses Taught Annually	Total Number of Students Enrolled in Fellows' Courses
American University	8	33%	174
Northeastern University	7	50%	183
Ohio University	11	166%	430
Towson University	8	66%	183
Tulane University	8	25%	271
University of Delaware	10	63%	215
	<b>52 Courses</b>		<b>1456 Students</b>

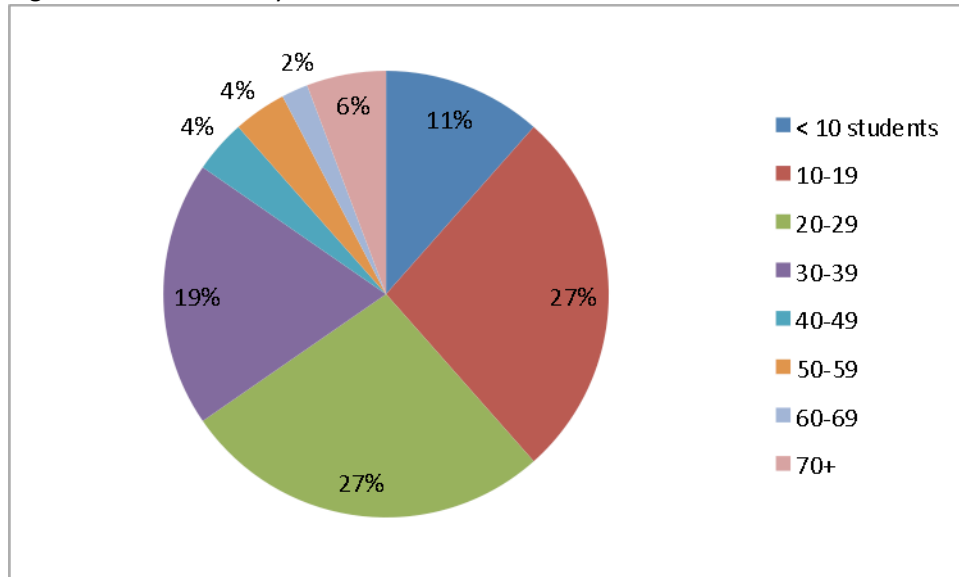
Courses covered a wide range of topics including Jewish American and European history, culture, Israel, philosophy, sociology, and religion. The broad range of topics included courses like "Under the Crescent and the Cross: Jews in the medieval world of Islam and Christianity," "Zionism and Modern Israel," and "Jewish Humor and History: From Sholem Aleichem to Seinfeld." [See Appendix A for a complete list of Fellows' courses]. Almost half were new courses, which the Fellows designed. Some of the Fellows' courses were already part of the Jewish studies curricula, but had not been taught for several years prior to JSEP. Others were core courses that had been taught previously by adjunct lecturers. In some cases, the Fellows took over the role of teaching introductory courses, allowing permanent faculty members to teach more specialized Jewish studies courses in their areas of expertise. Consequently, Fellows also indirectly contributed to increased course variety at their host schools.

The Fellows enabled programs to increase the consistency of courses offered. For example, at Northeastern, the Fellow taught the gateway course "Introduction to Jewish Religion and Culture" each semester. Gateway courses are broad survey courses that are designed to offer an overview of the subject matter and attract students to enroll in additional courses on related topics. They are crucial to increasing the number of students likely to take more advanced Jewish studies courses and to minor or major in Jewish studies. This course was

previously offered just once a year. Even with the increased number of sections, enrollment for the course remained steady, illustrating the extent of student demand. As a result, an increased number of students were exposed to Jewish studies each semester.

Fellows taught both upper and lower division courses, including large lectures, seminars and independent studies. Class sizes varied from as few as 7 students to as many as 98. The average class size was 28 students. The majority of courses had between 10-29 students (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Enrollment by Class Size



Course enrollment is influenced by numerous factors including: when the course is taught (early morning courses are typically the least popular), whether or not the course is cross-listed, if the course is a seminar or lecture, and the extent of students' interest in the topic. Additionally, when courses fulfill a requirement for graduation, enrollments are typically higher.

Enrollment numbers are also influenced by the extent of a professor's presence on campus and their reputation. This was the case at the University of Delaware. During the first year, a total of 66 students were enrolled in the Fellow's five courses. These relatively low enrollment numbers can be attributed to factors related to the Fellow's lack of visibility on campus. During his first semester, the Fellow's courses were not announced or advertised until after registration began. Nor were his courses initially cross-listed or designated as general education requirements. By the second year, those issues were addressed and the Fellow had established a positive reputation among students. Consequently, his course enrollment doubled: he taught a total of 149 students during the second year.

### Students' Demographics

At the end of each semester, students who took Fellows' courses were invited to participate in an online survey. The survey was designed to explore students' ethno-religious backgrounds, their motivations for enrolling, and the extent of their involvement in Jewish extracurricular activities. Students' feedback was solicited about the quality of the instructors and the courses

overall. Additionally, questions focused on students' perceptions of the impact of the courses on their knowledge, attitudes and behavior.

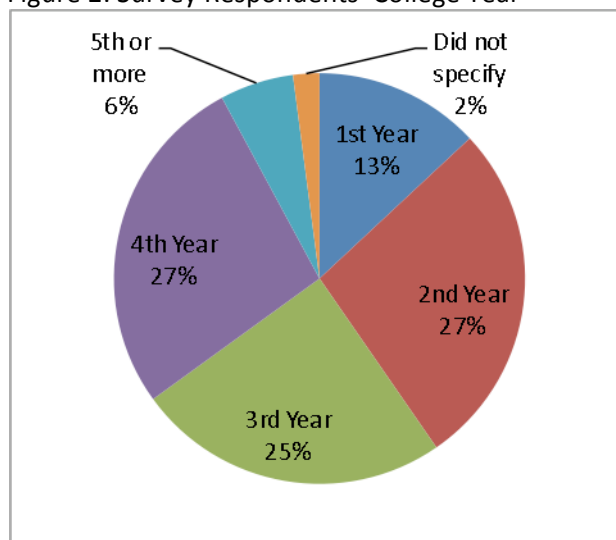
The overall response rate was 33% (483 respondents), which is slightly higher than the typical response rate for online surveys. Of those, 45% of students identified as Jewish, another 45% identified as non-Jewish, and 10% of respondents did not indicate their ethno-religious background.

The students who took Fellows' courses had diverse backgrounds and motivations for enrolling. At each university, the courses offered by the Fellows attracted members of the target population, namely Jewish students who were not otherwise involved in Jewish life on campus. The courses also attracted a large number of non-Jewish students, as well as Jewish students who were actively involved with Jewish organizations on campus.

Fellows' courses attracted a majority of students who had never before taken a Jewish studies course. For approximately 70% of students, the Fellows' courses were their first experience of Jewish studies. More non-Jewish students than Jewish students were new to Jewish studies: 80% of non-Jewish survey respondents had not previously taken a Jewish studies course, whereas 58% of Jewish respondents were new to Jewish studies.

Approximately 80% of students who responded to the survey were between the ages of 18-22, which is typical of an undergraduate population. The courses attracted students at every stage of their undergraduate careers (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Survey Respondents' College Year



Women were disproportionately represented among respondents, which is typical of survey response behavior: 64% of survey respondents were women and 36% were men. That gender distribution is not necessarily representative of the actual gender distribution in Fellows' courses. When asked to estimate the number of men and women enrolled in their courses, Fellows reported figures that were less divergent (although by their estimations, women also

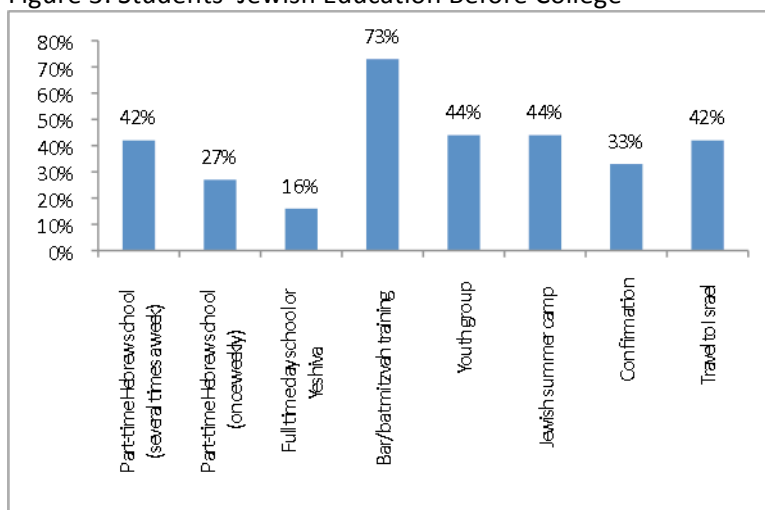
made up the majority). Fellows estimated that approximately 53% of their students were women and 47% were men.

Students who enrolled in Fellows' courses majored in subjects from almost every academic discipline. The three most common majors among students were history, psychology, and political science. A small number of students at each school said they enrolled in more than one of the Fellows' courses.

Many of the Jewish students who took Fellows' courses had complex ethno-religious backgrounds. Almost half of the students who identified as Jewish had family members who were not Jewish. Of those, most had a parent who was not born Jewish and some had extended family members who were not Jewish. 11% of the students who identified as Jewish also saw themselves as a part of another religious tradition. They identified as both Jewish and Catholic, Christian, Hindu, or Buddhist.

Being Jewish was not a primary interest for many of the Jewish students who responded to the survey. Most came to college with some prior Jewish education (Figure 3), yet the majority of students were not religiously observant: 70% of students said they did not do anything special to acknowledge Shabbat. Less than half attended High Holiday services in the past year and 18% had not attended any type of Jewish service whatsoever since they entered college.

Figure 3: Students' Jewish Education Before College



Likewise, most Jewish survey respondents did not associate with Jewish campus organizations. The majority did not attend events sponsored by Jewish student organizations with any regularity: 27% never attended such events, 35% attended a few times a year and 13% attended about once a month.

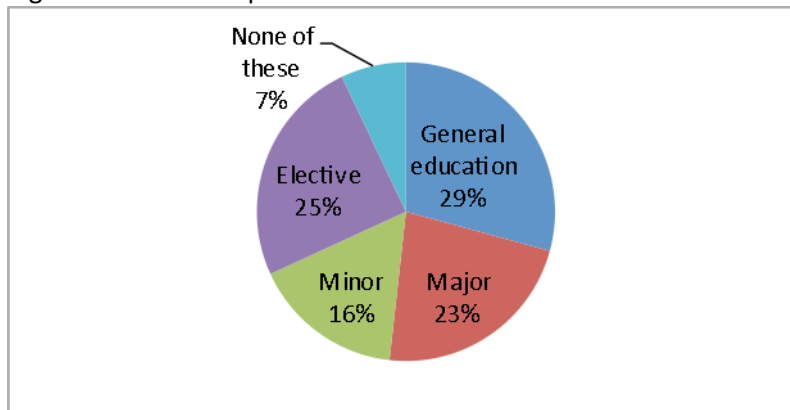
While a minority of Jewish survey respondents were actively involved in Jewish campus life, most expressed their Jewish identities outside of Jewish organizations. Most did not attend High Holiday services, yet more than half said they acknowledged the High Holidays in some way. The majority reported that Jews were among their closest friends.

Their lack of interest in formal affiliation does not mean they lacked Jewish identities. 54% indicated that being Jewish was very important to them. Another 36% said that being Jewish was fairly important. Only 8% said that being Jewish was not very important and just 3 students said being Jewish was not at all important to them.

### Motivations to Enroll

Almost every student took Fellows' courses to fulfill requirements for graduation. Courses taught by Fellows fulfilled requirements for general education, electives, majors, and minors (Figure 4). Only a small percentage of students surveyed took Jewish studies courses that did not fulfill any requirements.

Figure 4: Course Requirements Fulfilled



Almost half of all students -- both Jewish and non-Jewish -- were primarily motivated to enroll in their Jewish studies course because they wanted to deepen their existing knowledge of the topic. The second most popular motivation among all respondents was logistical: 158 students said they enrolled because the course fit their schedule.

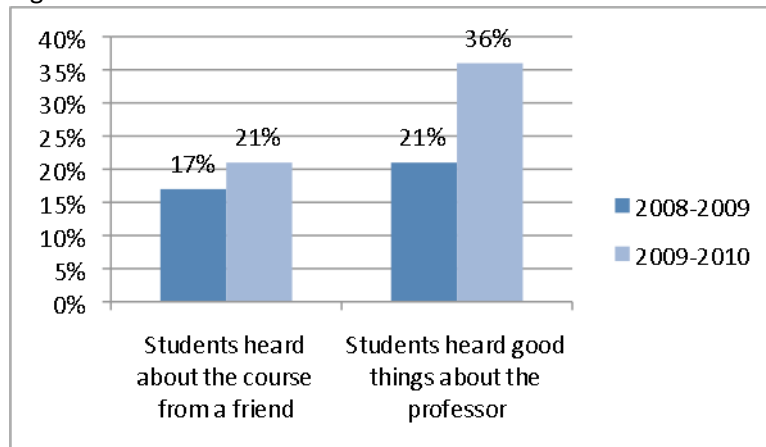
The courses successfully attracted students who did not otherwise engage in Jewish life on campus. For many, taking a Jewish studies course was their only form of Jewish involvement. Most of the 41% of Jewish students who said they enrolled because they wanted to do something Jewish did not engage in Jewish life on campus with any regularity. Some participated in Jewish events a few times a year at most, and others never participated. Significantly, 89% of Jewish respondents felt that taking a Jewish studies course in college was an important expression of their Jewish identities. Some Jewish students said they were motivated to enroll because they hoped to learn more about their own heritage. Others said they wanted to add to the Jewish education they received as children.

For non-Jewish students, the second most compelling motivation to enroll was to learn about a topic they were generally unfamiliar with. Though the course material was new to them, many of the non-Jewish students had significant previous exposure to Jews. 93% non-Jewish students said they had close Jewish friends. A small percent of the non-Jewish students also had Jewish family members.

The majority of students learned about the courses from the course catalog. Many also learned about the courses through word of mouth: some heard about the courses from their friends and other heard about it directly from the Fellows. Advertising with posters and emails attracted only a small percentage of students.

For many students, a professor's reputation was more salient than their interest in the topic when deciding which course to choose. A fourth year Jewish studies and political science major at American University explained why she took the course "Museums and Memory in the United States and Israel." She said: "The topic was interesting, but I took this class because I heard Dr. Spiegel was a great professor and should take a class with her." As Figure 5 illustrates, the Fellows' positive reputations grew over the course of the Fellowship.

Figure 5: Students' Word of Mouth



During the first year, 8% of students said they were motivated to enroll in Fellows' courses because they had positive experiences in a previous Jewish studies course. In the second year, 13% were motivated for that reason. A third year business major explained his motivation for taking a Jewish history course: "I had taken other Jewish studies courses with this professor and had thoroughly enjoyed them." At another school, a third year history major explained her motivation: "I adore this professor and would take anything I could with him."

## 2. Impact on the Students

The courses stimulated students' interest in Jewish studies on both academic and personal levels. The courses added depth to students' prior knowledge, exposed some to content that was completely new to them, and helped others clarify misconceptions. For some, courses sparked their interest in exploring their own heritage and some described their increased interest in Jewish involvement.

Students offered overwhelmingly positive feedback about their experiences in Fellows' courses. 64% indicated that the overall quality of the course was excellent, and another 32% characterized the course was good. Students were similarly affirming about Fellows' teaching abilities: 73% of all students said their instructor was excellent and 24% said their instructor was good.

Every Fellow received exceedingly positive feedback. Survey respondents used terms like "excellent" and "fantastic" to describe the Fellows. Students from varied backgrounds and with a wide range of academic interests offered similarly exuberant praise. A Jewish fourth year, animal science major at the University of Delaware wrote: "I can not say enough about my professor. He was very knowledgeable and fun. I say this with all sincerity that I was told before starting college there will be one professor that impacts your life and that professor is Matthew LaGrone. He is excellent." A non- Jewish fourth year linguistics major at Ohio University said that his course on Jewish humor was "Hands down, the best course I have ever taken in my college career ...I actually looked forward to going to every class." A non-Jewish second year psychology major at Tulane University exclaimed: "Absolutely a great teacher! One of the best teachers I've ever had! I feel like I've learned so much. I wish he could teach all of my classes!"

Every Fellow received praise for their specific pedagogical talents. Fellows were described as knowledgeable, thoughtful, and enthusiastic. Students said the Fellows were accessible, open to questions, and respectful to students. Students indicated that their interest in the course topic was enhanced by the Fellows' compelling teaching style. Fellows presented the material with clarity and were well organized. A number of students – both Jewish and non-Jewish -- noted that their professors offered enough background to make the lessons accessible to students without prior knowledge of the topic. Fellows created a learning atmosphere where students felt comfortable asking questions.

86% Found their courses interesting.

84% Felt their instructor was well prepared for class sessions.

83% Found the instructor to be knowledgeable about the course topic.

81% Would recommend their course to other students.

77% Said the course stimulated their interest in the topic.

73% Would take another course with the instructor.

Students entered their courses with varying degrees of previous knowledge. Many of the Jewish students indicated that they were exposed to Jewish education as children. Other students said they knew very little about the topic prior to enrolling. Some non-Jewish students had very little previous exposure to Jews at all: 18% said that no Jewish students attended their high school and 27% made their first Jewish friend during college.

The number of students who spoke favorably about the Fellows far outweighed the number of students who offered critiques. Nevertheless, each Fellow received some negative comments about their pedagogical style. A small number of students considered Fellows' teaching style "boring" and "dry." While most students said they enjoyed Fellows' choice of reading materials, a few requested that the reading be more interesting, and a few others felt there should be less reading in general. Some students said the course would be improved with more time for discussion and interaction among students. For a small percentage of students, Fellows were less successful at making their courses accessible: 12% asserted that their professors sometimes used Hebrew and/or Yiddish words they did not understand.

### Knowledge Acquisition

Regardless of the extent of their prior knowledge, students indicated that they benefited from the learning experience. Many Jewish students said their courses brought greater depth to their existing knowledge. Students enjoyed learning about Jews from an academic perspective. A computer science and mathematics major, who took a Survey of the Jewish History course primarily because she wanted to do something Jewish, asserted: "The course was hugely informative and really broadened my knowledge base. I have taken Jewish studies courses, but not in college before. ...I found the content to be at a significantly higher level than my pre-college days, more objective, and very interesting. I really enjoyed it." A Jewish student from another school wrote: "I've taken Jewish studies courses for my whole life, through camp and my synagogue, and even though I knew the basics, I learned so much in this class." An art student who has one Jewish parent, but was raised Catholic, considered the course "a sort of follow up to the birthright trip" she recently took. She came to identify with her Jewish heritage as a result of the trip, and said that the course helped her "appreciate even more what [she] saw and learned" in Israel.

Another student noted the value of taking a Jewish studies course that based in the academic discipline, as opposed to a cross-listed Jewish studies course, which he had previously taken. He explained: "The professor is specifically a Jewish studies professor, and so focuses primarily on Jewish related topics, whereas most other JWST courses that I've taken have been taught by professors of other departments, such as philosophy. Those professors, in my opinion, emphasized too much on the philosophy aspect, thereby taking away from the Jewish aspects."

### Exposure to New Ideas

Many students mentioned their increased knowledge about the diversity of Jewish culture, religious observance, and ideology. A Jewish first year student, who had been educated exclusively in Conservative Jewish institutions, said she learned about diversity in Jewish thought. She explained, "I learned that even Jews have different views on God, creation, and the Holocaust." Some learned about denominations in American Judaism for the first time. A

third year student who identifies as a Conservative Jew said that his first Jewish studies course helped him “to see that the Reform movement isn't necessarily an abomination.” Other students learned about Jewish communities around the world and many were introduced to the idea of gender roles in Judaism for the first time.

For some, their Jewish studies course was their first opportunity to learn about Israel in an academic setting. A third year international relations major said, “What surprised me was the pluralism of thought when it comes to Zionism. I never really had an understanding of Zionism before this class. For some reason, I had always thought that all Jews were Zionist. Granted, I had never really given it explicit thought, but it seemed that Zionism was just a political version of Judaism.” Though she has a Jewish mother, that student does not identify as Jewish. Significantly, she indicated that the course increased her interest in learning about her heritage.

### Clarifying Misconceptions

Courses fostered increased tolerance and understanding among non-Jewish students by clarifying some students' misconceptions. A Fellow had a Muslim student from Saudi Arabia in her survey course who took an introductory course to counter-balance what he had been taught about Jews growing up. A first year psychology major was surprised to learn that “Jews don't believe in Jesus Christ.” She admitted, “I was never was sure of the difference between Christianity and Judaism.” A first year architecture student said she was surprised to learn that “some things that the Catholic religion teaches about the Jewish religion proved untrue.”

For many non-Jewish students, the Fellows' courses were not only their first experience of Jewish studies, but were also the most interaction they had with Jewish peers. Gaining exposure to Jewish peers was a positive experience for many: 28% of non-Jewish students said they made their first Jewish friend since coming to college and 21% reported that they made a new Jewish friend while taking their Jewish studies course.

Many non-Jewish students noted a shift in their perspective resulting from their Jewish studies experience: 61% said they were more aware of portrayals of Jews in the media and 58% said their course made them more likely to notice when someone makes a negative remark about Jews. Jewish students too, noted their increased awareness. A Jewish finance major, who was not at all active in Jewish life on campus, said that her first Jewish studies course made her more aware when people make Jewish remarks around her, and motivated her to increase her religious observance.

### Behavioral Changes

The courses stirred students' interest in taking additional Jewish studies courses. 53% of all students said they were interested in taking or planning to take additional Jewish studies courses. 58% of Jewish survey respondents strongly agreed and 26% slightly agreed that they were interested in taking or planning to take additional Jewish studies courses because of their experience. A non-Jewish History major said that her first Jewish studies course “stirred [her] thirst to learn more about Jewish studies.” A physics major initially took Modern Jewish History because she heard good things about the Fellow's teaching, but asserted that the course material “piqued [her] interest in Jewish studies.”

Students were highly engaged in the learning process, both in and outside of the classroom. 75% of students said they found themselves talking to friends outside of class about the material covered in the course. 55% said this course motivated them to read related books and/or articles. A Jewish criminal Justice major who was not at all involved in Jewish life on campus asserted that her first Jewish studies course enabled her to do something Jewish in a non-threatening way. She explained: “I feel more interested in and connected to my Jewish roots without feeling pressured to believe in God, be religious, etc.”

Fellows reported that some students expressed a desire to minor in Jewish studies. A few students also expressed an interest in Jewish communal work, Israel advocacy, and graduate work in Jewish studies. A non-Jewish history student, who had no education about Jews before college, and almost no previous exposure to Jewish people or culture, was profoundly moved by her Jewish studies courses. The Fellow “had a major impact on [her] life,” helping her learn about “both the field of Jewish studies and opportunities to encounter Jewish culture on campus.” As a result, she plans to attend graduate school to study Jewish history and the Holocaust.

“I feel more interested in and connected to my Jewish roots without feeling pressured to believe in God, be religious, etc.”  
– A Jewish criminal justice major

Many Jewish students said the courses made them feel more connected to their Jewish identities. They expressed pride in being Jewish. 47% of Jewish survey respondents strongly agreed and 27% slightly agreed that the courses increased their interest in learning about their own ethnic/religious heritage. A fourth year student, who has taken on leadership roles at Hillel, said her History of Jewish Humor course “made [her] love Jews and feel more special.” A Jewish student who was not at all involved on campus said that her Jewish Religion and Culture course made her “more respectful and proud of Judaism as a culture and a religion.” She continued: “I have more respect for those who continue to revitalize and influence the rest of the Jewish community.” Another student, who was in the process of converting to Judaism, asserted that her Jewish studies course “helped [her] form [her] own Jewish identity.”

The courses were thought provoking for students who grew up with intermarried parents. A number of students who have one Jewish parent told a Fellow that her American Jewish Popular Culture course caused them to think about their identity in new ways. Another Fellow said that many of his students – Jewish and non-Jewish -- told him that the course discussions stimulated their reflection on their own religious identity.

Students said they valued studying topics to which they felt personally connected. An Israeli international affairs major said that her course made her look at Judaism as it relates to her life. She said: “I am walking away this semester with a new understanding of my religion and want to continue learning about the religion.” A Jewish social studies major who was active in Hillel said “I really enjoy history and I find it even more interesting when I can personally relate the material to my life and family.” Another Jewish student, who was not at all involved with Jewish life on campus, said of her Jewish Religion and Culture course: “It was a wonderful course that truly opened my eyes to my own religion and made me realize how little I know, and how much more I hope to learn.” In addition to her interest in taking additional Jewish

studies courses, the course motivated her to get involved with Israel advocacy on campus and to increase her religious observance.

Some Jewish students reported an interest in increasing their Jewish involvement. 15% of Jewish survey respondents strongly agreed and 26% slightly agreed that the course motivated them to get involved with Jewish life on campus. 26% strongly agreed and 18% slightly agreed that the course motivated them to increase their religious observance. A Jewish psychology major said her first Jewish studies course, “helped [her] to re-gain interest in Judaism in both religious and cultural ways.” Before the course, she was not at all involved in Jewish campus life. The course, she explained, helped her to “re-instill a pride in my Judaism and has made me consider becoming more actively Jewish in the community.”

“I am walking away this semester with a new understanding of my religion and want to continue learning about the religion.”

– An Israeli, international affairs major

Some students said their courses helped them feel connected to Israel. 30% of Jewish students said their courses motivated them to get involved with Israel advocacy on campus. A political science major said

that he would be going on Birthright Israel a result of his “Zionism and the Challenges of Statehood” course. He explained, “I had always planned on it but never pursued the birthright option. After a month in this course, I applied and will be going in July (if all goes according to plan). I feel extremely prepared and excited after having engaged in so much studying this semester. I am now much more interested in becoming involved in Jewish life than I was before the course. I will certainly continue studying all I can about Zionism, Judaism, Israel, my own Jewishness, and so forth.” A student from a mixed Catholic-Jewish family told one Fellow that after the course, he decided to visit Israel and volunteer on a kibbutz. An American studies major said that because of the course, “[he] started to see Israel much differently.” The course sparked his interest in visiting. “Before, since I have never been, I did not feel a strong connection to it,” he said, “but now I really want to go. I feel connected to Israel in a new way.”

### 3. Impact on the Jewish Studies Programs

In addition to teaching, Fellows created opportunities for students to encounter Jewish studies outside the classroom. In doing so, Fellows raised the profiles of the Jewish studies programs on each campus. JSEP provided funding to support these efforts. Since there were no specific guidelines determining how to carry out these tasks, Fellows approached their responsibility in a variety of ways and to different extents. Fellows planned large and small-scale events, both on campus and off, which were open to the university and local communities. Every Fellow brought guest speakers to their campuses and some organized their Jewish studies programs' annual lecture series. Fellows were also invited to speak at other universities and in Jewish communal venues. Two Fellows engaged with the local Jewish community by organizing lecture series at area congregations. The Fellow at Northeastern was responsible for shaping the public face of Jewish studies as the editor of *Haverim*, the Jewish studies newsletter. Additionally, two Fellows were key to the establishment of their schools' inaugural Jewish studies abroad programs.

The number of events organized by the Fellows varied, but their efforts were highly successful. During the granting period, Fellows organized and participated in more than 50 events. Every Fellow produced at least one event that was attended by more than 100 students and community members. Jewish studies directors, students, and the Fellows themselves described how they became "the face of Jewish studies." Some Fellows noted that taking Jewish studies courses became "the thing to do" on their campuses, because students were enthusiastically recommending the courses to their friends.

Fellows drew upon resources funded by the Foundation for Jewish Culture. The Fellow at Tulane created the Jewish Film Sushi Series, which screened films that were awarded grants from the Foundation's Lynn and Jules Kroll Fund for Jewish Documentary Films. The Fellows at Northeastern and Delaware organized large-scale community events that featured Foundation-funded filmmaker Nicole Opper. Six Points Fellow, Galeet Dardashti, was a guest lecturer at Northeastern University, where she spoke in the Fellow's "Introduction to Jewish Religion and Culture" course and led a Sephardi/Mizrahi Shabbat service at Hillel.

Fellows also partnered with individuals from programs that were funded by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation. For example Dan Geva, the Schusterman Visiting Artist Residency at the Maryland Institute College of Art, screened and discussed Tal Haim Yoffe's film "The Green Dumpster Mystery" at Towson University.

Fellows publicized their role as Schusterman Teaching Fellows through their multiple speaking engagements. They raised the profile of the Fellowship as panelists at academic conferences like the Association for Jewish Studies annual conference and the American Academy of Religion's annual meeting. They gave talks at Yeshiva University and Ursinus College. The Fellow at Towson gave a talk at American University and the Fellow from American was a guest lecturer at Towson. Fellows also organized lectures at local synagogues and Jewish Community Centers.

Fellows collaborated with scholars from other departments and programs. At American University, the Fellow worked with the Center for Israel Studies on behalf of the Jewish Studies Program Center to organize: "Dancing Israeli Identity: An Evening with Celebrated Israeli Dance

choreographer Idan Cohen.” The Fellow at Tulane worked with his local Jewish Community Center to organize lectures that were co-sponsored by the Kennan Institute of the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars in Washington D.C. and supported in part by the Posen Foundation’s Center for Cultural Judaism. At Northeastern, the Fellow joined a university teaching circle, a group of ten professors across disciplines that met twice monthly.

Some Fellows took over running their programs’ annual events. At Ohio University, the Fellow planned the Annual Lazaroff Lecture and the Fellow at Northeastern ran the annual lecture series. The Fellow at the University of Delaware was responsible for organizing the 15-week speaker’s series that brings visiting lecturers to speak on a variety of topics related to Jewish studies. The series was open to the public and was a required course for Jewish studies minors.

At two schools, new study abroad programs were created. The Fellow at Towson organized and led “The Holocaust in Historical Context, ” a weeklong trip to Poland that fulfills the requirements for a course in the history department. At the University of Delaware, the Fellow will co-direct the newly organized study abroad experience, “Prejudice, Genocide, and Democratization: Eastern Europe from Psychological and Historical Perspectives,” which is a joint project of the psychology department and Jewish studies program.

Fellows also played a role in formalizing Jewish studies courses. For example, the Fellow at University of Delaware was the first to teach “Introduction to Jewish History” and “Introduction to Judaism,” on his campus. Since they were new, the courses initially carried a designation as “experimental.” The Fellow assisted the director of Jewish studies to get those courses “on the books,” as part of the approved curriculum.

The Fellows also made meaningful connections with students outside of the classroom. Four Fellows organized Jewish student groups, and one was asked to advise a group formed by students. At Tulane, the Fellow organized the Jewish Studies Student Group. Another student group took shape at the University of Delaware: together with Hillel, Dr. LaGrone helped his mentor, Dr. Heidi Kaufman, establish the Jewish Culture in the Arts Program (JCAP). Students at Ohio University started a pro-Israel group called Bobcats for Israel, and asked Dr. Tanny to be the faculty advisor.

Fellows worked in collaboration with Hillel to various extents. As was previously reported, the blurred lines between academia and engagement were complicated for some Fellows. Some worked extensively with Hillel, meeting regularly with professionals, speaking formally and informally to affiliated students, and co-sponsoring events. Other Fellows preferred not to make such connections. Some said they felt uncomfortable with the expectation that they act as positive Jewish role models for Jewish students. They asserted that they were trained as scholars of Jewish studies not outreach coordinators, and felt it was inappropriate to attempt to influence their students’ Jewish identities beyond engaging them intellectually.

Fellows described other challenges that resulted from the complex dynamics between Jewish studies and Hillel. Fellows acknowledged a sense of competition with Hillel, since both groups are competing for the same funding opportunities. Fellows were also aware that while some of their students were very attracted to Jewish studies, they were not at all

interested in affiliating with Hillel. As a result, Fellows purposefully differentiated the activities of Jewish studies from those of Hillel, even when the two groups collaborated.

Another challenge to increasing the visibility of Jewish studies through extracurricular activities was Fellows' teaching loads. One Fellow articulated sentiments that the every Fellow expressed with these words: "between teaching, writing, navigating departmental and university politics, planning events, and worrying about where you'll be in the future ...it's a lot." Because of his workload, the Fellow at Ohio University was not able to organize any events during the first year. As the only Fellow at a university that utilizes the quarter system rather than semesters, he was required to teach more courses per year than the other Fellows. During the second year, he was released from his full teaching responsibilities to give him time to organize events. Another Fellow asserted that the time needed to fulfill the programming responsibilities of the Fellowship was equivalent to teaching an additional course.

Despite these challenges, Fellows were successful at creating scholarly events that engaged students in Jewish studies both inside and outside of the classroom. In doing so, Fellows increased the visibility of Jewish studies on their campuses and in the local Jewish communities.

## 4. Impact on the Fellows

JSEP provided Fellows with hands-on learning opportunities, practical skill building, and mentoring. Fellows gained invaluable teaching experience: they developed syllabi, taught classes of different sizes, and managed heavy course loads. They gained experience navigating departmental dynamics and university bureaucracies.

At the JSEP retreats and meetings, Fellows participated in workshops about course design, classroom presentation, and publishing. They learned about cultural programs funded by the Foundation. Additionally, Fellows and mentors reflected on the challenges and successes of the JSEP experience.

Fellows were grateful for the opportunity to be part of a cohort of Fellows. They appreciated having colleagues to turn to when they needed resources or advice. They also appreciated having a sense of community during the Association for Jewish Studies annual conference. One Fellow commented: “Being in a supportive academic community in the field of Jewish studies is unique. It was great to have something positive in the midst of a discouraging job climate.”

Fellows also acknowledged the value of their relationship with the Foundation for Jewish Culture. They hope to maintain their relationships with the Foundation and intend to continue to draw upon the Foundation’s cultural resources in their teaching.

The JSEP experience made Fellows stronger candidates for the academic job market. One Fellow said that his programming experience made him a more attractive candidate at a university with plans to develop their Jewish studies program. Fellows felt they benefited from the prestige that has come to be associated with the Schusterman Teaching Fellow title. When applying for jobs, Fellows noted that interviewing professors were familiar with JSEP. Fellows felt that the recognition they received because of their strong teaching experience, coupled with the cachet of the JSEP Fellowship, made them more appealing job candidates.

As was previously reported, Fellows received mentoring to differing extents. Some received almost no supervision or mentoring. Others received a great deal of supervision but little mentoring, and still others received supervision and mentoring that they felt was extremely beneficial. Without specific guidelines, the nature of the mentoring relationships grew out of the unique circumstance at each university.

The extent of the Jewish studies programs’ infrastructure had a significant impact on both the Fellows’ roles and the extent of the support they received. Where there was little infrastructure, Fellows had more administrative responsibilities, received less oversight, and got virtually no mentoring. In some cases, there was no appropriate faculty person to serve as a mentor: some Fellows were the only scholars at their universities with training in the field of Jewish studies. Where strong leadership was lacking, Fellows essentially took on the role of the Jewish studies director. Where Jewish studies programs had stronger leadership, Fellows had fewer administrative responsibilities and benefited from more robust mentoring.

One Fellow, who had virtually no mentoring during the first year, had an extremely positive mentoring experience during the second year as a result of personnel changes. Another Fellow's mentor left the university during his first year. The Fellow's replacement mentor had no experience in his field and little background in Jewish studies. However, that Fellow was pleased with the guidance he received from his official mentor's spouse, who works in his field at a different university.

Despite the differing circumstances, Fellows in each situation said they benefited from the mentoring experience. They were grateful for advice about teaching and syllabi design. Some also gained valuable information about publishing in their fields. Mentors also helped Fellows network with other scholars. Every mentor wrote recommendation letter for their Fellows, helping them procure their next positions.

## 5. The Immediate Future for the Fellows and the Jewish Studies Programs

Each Jewish studies program is attempting to maintain the expansion created by their participation in JSEP. At two universities, the Jewish studies programs have procured support to fund a post-doctoral fellow for the 2010-2011 academic year. At the other four universities, programs are trying to maintain the increased number of Jewish studies courses by shifting existing resources and relying on personnel changes. Most Jewish studies directors remain hopeful about the future growth of their programs, encouraged by the clear demand for Jewish studies courses exhibited by the JSEP experience. However, because of the economic climate, no program is situated to continue expansion at this time.

Fundraising has been a significant challenge in every Jewish studies program. Key stakeholders cited the state of the economy as the primary reason for their inability to continue to grow their programs. Some mentors also noted that they have no training in either fundraising or program development, and suggested that skill building in these areas be include in JSEP in the future. Some also noted that two years is not a sufficient length of time in which to engender the growth of an academic program.

Some Jewish studies directors admitted that university funding for a new tenure track position is unlikely under any circumstance. In every university department, tenure track lines are highly sought after and scarce. At Ohio University, for example, the history department is lacking professors who specialize in East Asian, German and Middle Eastern history. Since academic departments are ultimately responsible for designating their hiring priorities, filling these positions will take precedent over hiring a scholar who specializes in Jewish studies. Regardless, there is no funding available to fill any of those positions. In the future, when the opportunity arises to hire a historian in one of the priority fields, a scholar whose work also focuses on Jewish topics could potentially be hired. But that remains unlikely since the field of Jewish studies is not a priority for the History department.

Because of similar circumstances on other campuses, Jewish studies directors asserted that full time positions in Jewish studies will most likely only be created with funding from outside the university. However, they also mentioned their difficulty obtaining fundraising assistance from their university development offices, since funding for Jewish studies is not a university priority either. Such structural circumstances will likely hamper the prospect of securing an additional faculty line in Jewish studies, despite the clear successes of JSEP.

Modest advancements have been made at the University of Delaware and Ohio University. In both cases, Fellows assisted with the programs' fundraising efforts. Potential donors sat in on Fellows' courses and met with Fellows outside of the classroom. In both cases, these interactions helped procure funding for a postdoctoral position for the year following JSEP.

At Tulane University, the increased visibility of the Jewish studies program has opened the door to potential funding sources. The program has had very preliminary conversations about potentially partnering in some capacity with the NOLA Jewish Endowment, the Covenant Foundation and Birthright Next. Additionally, the program might work with the Foundation to bring cultural events to next year's General Assembly (an annual conference of North American

Jewish Federation lay leaders, professionals, partner organizations and other national Jewish organizations), which will be held in New Orleans.

The economic climate has also affected the future prospects of the Fellows. While increasing numbers of individuals are earning PhDs, new positions are not being created. Nor are positions being refilled, when professors retire. Fellows noted that as many as 50 candidates applied for only a few available positions. While every Fellow has work in the coming academic year, just two have been hired into tenure track positions.

What follows is a description of the immediate future plans of each program and Fellow. At three schools, those futures are intertwined. In every case, the Jewish studies programs attempted to create opportunities for the Fellows to stay at their universities. This speaks to the extent of Fellows' impact on the programs. Fellows proved to be valuable resources: they were compelling and popular teachers, competent administrators, effective event planners and valued colleagues.

### American University

The Fellow has been appointed Visiting Assistant Professor of History and Jewish Studies at American University for the 2010-2011 academic year. This position is a sabbatical replacement for the current director of Jewish studies. Two other developments among the faculty may help to sustain the increased enrollment numbers that were achieved with the addition of the Fellow. The Department of History added a new faculty member who has teaching and research interests in Jewish history. Additionally, the university hopes to establish a chair in Israel Studies in the near future. In the coming years, the Jewish studies program intends to continue discussions with university administration about requesting a new tenure track line in Jewish studies.

### Northeastern University

The Jewish studies program had been optimistic about funding a temporary full-time position to hire the Fellow for the coming year. However, the university's many transitions (including the restructuring of the College of Arts and Sciences and the hiring of a new Dean of Social Sciences and Humanities) made it impossible to secure the administration's support. Additionally, in the restructuring, the Interdisciplinary Studies Center, where the Jewish studies program was housed, has been eliminated. It is not yet clear where the program will be based in the future. As a result of this change, the future physical location of the Jewish studies program is uncertain. The arrival of the Fellow prompted the program's move to two adjacent offices and a conference room, giving the program a physical presence for the first time. However, with the university restructuring, it is not yet clear if the program will be able to stay in those offices, which were part of the Interdisciplinary Studies Center.

Other university transitions will benefit the Jewish studies program. Dr. Lori Lefkowitz has been hired as the inaugural holder of the Ruderman Professorship of Jewish Studies. She will have tenure in the English department and will serve as the director of Jewish studies. Under Dr. Lefkowitz' leadership, the program hopes to make additional hires within the next few years. In the meantime, the incoming Schusterman Visiting Israel Professor will teach the Zionism course

that was originated by Fellow. It is not clear if the Fellow's other courses will continue with any regularity.

The Fellow is moving to Chicago to accompany her husband who has been appointed the director of Northwestern University's Hillel. The Fellow will be teaching as an adjunct at Northwestern University and Spertus College.

### Ohio University

Funding has been secured to hire a post-doctoral fellow for the 2010-2011 academic year. Key stakeholders are certain this development would not have been possible without JSEP. The long-term goal of the program is to endow a chair in Jewish studies and expand the number of courses that count toward the Jewish studies certificate. In the short term, the goal is to continue to offer the expanded number of courses taught by the JSEP Fellow.

The department of Classics and World Religions obtained authority to hire a temporary instructor in Jewish Bible, a position they hope to make tenure track in the future. Unfortunately, there are currently no permanent faculty members who can teach the core courses of the certificate program. There is no plan in place to replace the historian of the Holocaust who left the university during the Fellow's first year.

The Fellow has accepted a tenure track position as Assistant Professor of History and Charles and Hannah Block Distinguished Professor of Jewish History at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington. As the university's first endowed chair in Jewish studies, the Fellow will be helping to develop the Jewish studies program.

### Towson University

When Towson University was awarded the JSEP Fellowship, there were no full time faculty members in Jewish studies. In July 2009, the Baltimore Hebrew Institute was established at Towson University. Seven professors from Baltimore Hebrew University have since been integrated in the philosophy and religion, history, and education departments. This development has significantly enhanced the possibilities for students interested in Jewish studies.

However, because of the scarcity of funding for higher education in the state of Maryland, along with national economic circumstances, the Jewish studies program will not be able to obtain a tenure track line in Jewish studies in the near future. Key stakeholders remain hopeful about obtaining funding to hire a visiting assistant professor of Jewish history/Jewish studies at some point, but there are currently no funding prospects.

The Fellow has accepted a three-year fellowship at SUNY Binghamton in Eastern European Jewish History. The position has the possibility of becoming tenure-track in the future.

### Tulane University

When Tulane University was awarded the JSEP Fellowship, there were two full time faculty members in Jewish studies. Soon after the Fellow's arrival, one of the full time faculty members left the university. The Fellow was hired to fill that position and will be the director of Jewish studies for the next two years.

The goal for the future of Jewish studies at Tulane is to maintain the current program and not become diminished in size or momentum. Maintaining the number of courses offered will be challenging in the near future for a number of reasons. The current director of Jewish studies will be on sabbatical for two semesters. Also, two grants that funded teaching positions in Jewish studies are ending: the position funded by the Posen Project for the Study of Secular Jewish History and Cultures and the Schusterman Visiting Israeli Professor. However, through JSEP, the program successfully demonstrated student interest in Jewish studies. As a result, the university provided funding to hire an adjunct professor to teach some of the courses that were taught by the professors who are leaving.

### University of Delaware

With the help of the Fellow, the Jewish studies program obtained the funding to extend the Fellow's position for one year, as the Yetta Chaiken Teaching Fellowship in Jewish History. The Fellow will co-direct the newly developed study abroad program to Poland, and will co-teach courses with a professor from the Warsaw Institute for the Study of Prejudice. The Jewish studies program aims to create a permanent, rotating post-doctoral position.

## Considerations for Advancing Program Goals

The findings in this report raise issues for consideration that emerged during JSEP's two-year pilot phase. The Foundation has already made a number of programmatic and policy related adjustments based on lessons learned from two mid-course evaluation reports (submitted in June and December 2009). What follows are issues for consideration, along with details about the changes JSEP has already instituted. Additionally, recommendations to further advance program goals are offered based on issues that surfaced during the second year of the pilot phase.

### TO FORWARD THE GOAL OF:

#### 1. Expanding the number and breadth of Jewish studies courses.

Fellows taught differing numbers of courses, some of which were new, others that had been recently taught by adjuncts, and still others that had not been taught for some time. Some Fellows taught the same courses repeatedly. Based on this mid-course finding, a recommendation was made to explicitly articulate expectations about the minimum number of new courses and the maximum number of repeat courses Fellows should teach. To address this issue, the 2010-2012 Fellowship agreement includes the requirement that Fellows teach two courses per academic term, with adjustments in teaching load possible in consultation with the Foundation. Of the eight courses, at least four are required to be new. With increased specificity around these expectations, the courses taught are likely to more effectively forward the goals of the Fellowship while addressing the needs of the Jewish studies programs.

#### 2. Increasing the number of Jewish students enrolled in Jewish studies courses

When courses fulfill a requirement for graduation, enrollments are typically higher. Because of mid-course recommendations, second cohort Fellows are obligated to teach at least four courses that fulfill a general or core course requirement. Additionally, each Jewish studies program is expected to provide regular reports detailing: the courses taught by the Fellow, enrollment figures, and related marketing efforts.

Findings from the current report also suggest:

- In order to obtain course designation in a timely manner, Jewish studies programs should anticipate the bureaucratic processes necessary to qualify Fellows' courses for requirement eligibility.
- Word of mouth is a powerful mode of publicity that should be cultivated as much as possible. Since both Jewish and non-Jewish students spoke positively about their experiences in Jewish studies, targeted efforts to recruit both Jewish and non-Jewish students should be employed.
- Advertising through flyers and email proved largely ineffective. These efforts should either be refined or discontinued.

#### 3. Engendering students' Jewish connections and community during their undergraduate experience.

Fellows' courses motivated students' interest in taking additional courses in Jewish studies and exploring their heritage. Some Jewish students were motivated to become involved in Jewish

life on campus and participate in Israel advocacy. Additionally, a small number of students became involved in Jewish student groups that were organized by Fellows. Some Fellows were uncomfortable with what they perceived as the expectation that they facilitate outreach to Jewish students.

To ensure that in-coming Fellows are fully apprised of the obligations of their position, the universities have been asked to make the Foundation's goals and expectations unambiguous. The Foundation also requested that participating universities "take into consideration the aptitude, experience and/or interest in Jewish cultural programming" during the hiring process.

To enable more effective assessment of the extent to which this goal is being met, the Foundation should:

- Consider more specifically articulating the meaning of "engendering students' Jewish connections and community."

#### 4. Increasing the visibility of the Jewish studies programs

Fellows organized a wide variety of events for diverse audiences in many types of venues. Some Fellows made this aspect of the Fellowship more central than others. Every Fellow produced original events and some were tasked with organizing existing programming. Many Fellows partnered with other departments, faculty members, and Hillel to expand the reach of their programs. Many also drew upon cultural resources from the Foundation.

Responding to the recommendation that the Foundation consider developing guidelines regarding the extent and type of engagement efforts preferred, Fellows are now required to organize a minimum of four Jewish studies related cultural events per academic year, in consultation with his or her mentor. Also, Fellows are expected to work with students outside the classroom and to be available for public lectures on campus and in the wider academic community. To address inconsistencies in the amount of time Fellows devoted to their programming efforts during the pilot phase, the Foundation recommends that: "Fellows spend a minimum of 20 hours per semester in the development and execution of Jewish cultural programming." The Foundation has agreed to help Fellows create and execute cultural programs by making the JSEP program director's time and resources available to them.

The following should also be considered:

- Clarify expectations around the extent to which Fellows are required to create original programming (as opposed to taking over the administration of programs' existing lecture series).
- Consider more explicitly articulating a goal related to Fellows' utilization of resources funded by the Foundation for Jewish Culture.
- Explicitly encourage Fellow's to strategically leverage relationships with other faculty and organizations to broaden the reach of their cultural programming. Since many Jewish studies programs are recipients of multiple Fellowships simultaneously, Fellows should proactively capitalize on such possibilities for synergy.

## 5. Provide junior scholars with opportunities to hone their teaching skills and develop their academic careers.

Fellows gained valuable skills from the teaching and professional development opportunities provided to them. Every Fellow valued the opportunity to connect with one another. Some benefited from the mentoring experience more than others. Since Fellows took on administrative roles to varying extents, some were afforded time to work on their own scholarship during the granting period while others were not.

The Foundation has already begun to address the challenge of uneven mentoring in three significant ways. First, when selecting universities for the second cohort, the importance of a Jewish studies director who can act as a suitable mentor was taken into account. Secondly, expectations regarding mentoring were clearly delineated to both Fellows and mentors at the May 2010 second cohort retreat. Finally, the Fellowship agreement states that universities are obligated to appoint a suitable senior scholar to act as a mentor for the Fellow. The agreement also delineates expectations about the mentors' responsibilities. Mentors are required to: conduct two classroom visits per semester to provide feedback about the Fellow's teaching, review the Fellow's syllabi, and agree to foster a supportive and accessible mentoring experience for the Fellow. Additionally, guidelines have been established regarding the extent of Fellows' administrative responsibilities.

The following recommendations should also be considered:

- In addition to ensuring that each Fellow has a suitable mentor, probable challenges such as personnel changes should be anticipated.
- Continue to support networking among first cohort Fellows and facilitate connections between Fellows in the first and second cohorts.
- Since publications are essential to the success of an emerging scholar, provide Fellows with funding to support their research during the summer. With that support in place, they can more fully focus on teaching and community building during the school year. At the retreats, encourage discussion among Fellows about the connections between their teaching and research interests.

## 6. Connect university and private funders in their efforts to promote further Jewish studies opportunities.

With the current economic climate, private funding is the most realistic possibility for expanding Jewish studies at this time.

- Offer Jewish studies directors training and support so they can acquire the skills necessary to be effective fundraisers.
- University-backed support of Jewish studies expansion must include the active participation of each school's development and advancement offices.
- Consider requiring programs to periodically report their fundraising efforts.

## 7. Help launch certificates and minors in Jewish studies and lay the groundwork for an additional faculty line in Jewish studies.

There are numerous challenges to achieving this goal, including: the limited timeframe of the grant, the current economic climate, and the politics surrounding university hiring.

- Consider redirecting the focus away from efforts to ensure institutional buy-in, and instead intensify efforts to obtain private funds.
- Since achieving this goal within the time frame of the grant is unrealistic for most Jewish studies programs, benchmarks should be articulated to measure the progress and process of these efforts.
- Jewish studies directors need guidance about how to effectively expand Jewish studies programs. Connecting them with directors who have been successful at such efforts would be beneficial.

## Final Thoughts

JSEP expanded opportunities for Jewish learning and engagement at the universities in the first cohort.

- JSEP's enrollment goal for the 2008-2010 Fellowship period was 1350 students. The actual enrollment numbers exceeded that goal: 1456 students took Fellows' courses. The addition of the Fellow to each Jewish studies program demonstrated that when more courses were offered, students enrolled.
- Fellows' courses attracted a majority of students who had never before taken a Jewish studies course. For approximately 70% of students, the Fellows' course was their first experience of Jewish studies.
- The courses successfully attracted students who did not otherwise engage in Jewish life on campus. For many, taking a Jewish studies course is their only form of Jewish involvement. Most of the 41% of Jewish students who said they enrolled because they wanted to do something Jewish did not engage in Jewish life on campus with any regularity.
- Students offered overwhelmingly positive feedback about their experience in Fellows' courses. 96% indicated that the overall quality of the course was either excellent or good. Students were similarly affirming about Fellows' teaching abilities: 97% of all students said their instructor was either excellent or good.
- The number of events organized by the Fellows varied, but their efforts were highly successful. During the granting period, Fellows organized and participated in more than 50 extracurricular events related to Jewish studies.

Students' qualitative responses also illustrate the success of the Fellowship. The learning experience stimulated students' interest in Jewish studies on both academic and personal levels. The courses added depth to students' prior knowledge, exposed some to content that was completely new to them and helped others clarify misconceptions. Both Jewish and non-Jewish students were motivated to reflect on their ethnic and religious identities. Jewish students felt a renewed sense of pride and connection to their Jewish identities. Some were motivated to increase their Jewish observance and participate in Jewish campus life and some felt more connected to Israel. The courses engendered students' interest in learning more about their own heritage and enrolling in additional Jewish studies courses.

The visibility of Jewish studies programs increased as a result of Fellows' extracurricular efforts. Fellows planned large and small-scale events, both on campus and off, which were open to the university and local communities. Every Fellow brought guest speakers to their campuses and some organized their Jewish studies programs' annual lecture series. Fellows were also invited to speak at other universities and in Jewish communal venues. Additionally, two Fellows were key to the establishment of their schools' inaugural Jewish studies abroad programs.

The JSEP experience provided Fellows with hands-on learning opportunities, practical skill building, and mentoring. Fellows gained invaluable teaching experience: they developed

syllabi, taught classes of different sizes, and managed heavy course loads. They gained experience navigating departmental dynamics and university bureaucracies. JSEP made the Fellows stronger candidates for the academic job market.

Each Jewish studies program is attempting to maintain the momentum created by their participation in JSEP. At every university, Jewish studies program attempted to create opportunities for the Fellows to stay at their universities. While the current economic climate made that goal unattainable for most, the desire for the Fellows to continue their work speaks to the extent of Fellows' impact on the programs. Fellows proved to be valuable resources: they were compelling and popular teachers, competent administrators, effective event planners and valued colleagues.

During the pilot phase, JSEP successfully increased opportunities for Jewish learning and engagement. JSEP's success is evident in the expanded number of courses, variety of topics taught, increased enrollments, and quantity of events produced. Additionally, students' high level of engagement and interest, along with Fellows' positive experiences of professional development, attest to the strength of the program.

With the programmatic and policy changes that have been implemented, JSEP has begun to benefit from the lessons of the pilot cohort. As it moves forward, JSEP promises to continue to attract new students to Jewish studies, boost the careers of emerging scholars, and increase the visibility of Jewish studies on campuses that have relatively large Jewish student populations, but only limited ability to offer Jewish studies courses and related extracurricular activities. Through these efforts, the seeds of Jewish studies expansion will continue to grow.

## Appendix A: Courses Taught by Fellows

University and Course Title	Semester/Quarter	Level	Enrollment
<b>American University</b>			
History of Israel	Fall 2008	Upper division	34
Modern Jewish Politics	Fall 2008	Upper division	9
The Holocaust	Spring 2009	Upper division	36
Jews, Culture, Empire	Spring 2009	Upper division	8
Modern Jewish Civilization	Fall 2009	Lower division	10
History of Israel	Fall 2009	Upper division	34
American Jewish Popular Culture	Spring 2010	Upper division	29
Museums and Memory: Israel and U.S.	Spring 2010	Upper division	14
		Total:	174
<b>Northeastern University</b>			
Introduction to Jewish Religion and Culture	Fall 2008	Lower division	55
Responses to the Holocaust	Fall 2008	Upper division	7
Introduction to Jewish Religion and Culture	Spring 2009	Lower division	43
Modern Judaism	Spring 2009	Lower division	14
Introduction to Jewish Religion and Culture	Fall 2009	Lower division	31
Zionism and the Challenges of Jewish Statehood	Spring 2010	Upper division	9
Introduction to Jewish Religion and Culture	Spring 2010	Lower division	24
		Total:	183
<b>Ohio University</b>			
Introduction to Jewish Civilization and Culture	Fall 2008	Lower division	11
Jewish History Since 1492	Fall 2008	Upper division	14
Jewish History Until 1500	Winter 2009	Upper division	19
Jewish Humor and History: From Sholem Aleichem to Seinfeld	Winter 2009	Upper division	98
Jews in American History	Spring 2009	Upper division	29
Zionism and Modern Israel	Spring 2009	Upper division	24
Jewish Humor and History: From Sholem Aleichem to Seinfeld	Fall 2009	Upper division	67
Jewish History Since 1500	Winter 2010	Upper division	24
Zionism and Modern Israel	Winter 2010	Upper division	24
The Jewish Holocaust	Spring 2010	Upper division	86
Jews in American History	Spring 2010	Upper division	34
		Total:	430
<b>Towson University</b>			
Survey of Jewish History	Fall 2008	Lower division	16
History of Holocaust	Fall 2008	Upper division	22
History of Ancient Israel	Spring 2009	Lower division	29
Jews in Eastern Europe Since 1789.	Spring 2009	Upper division	29
Under Crescent and Cross: Jews in the Medieval World of Islam and Christianity	Fall 2009	Upper division	28
Survey of Jewish History	Fall 2009	Lower division	22
History of Ancient Israel	Spring 2010	Upper division	23
Jews in Early Modern World	Spring 2010	Upper division	14
		Total:	183
<b>Tulane University</b>			
American Jewish History	Fall 2008	Upper division	13
Introduction to Jewish Studies	Fall 2008	Lower division	36
American Jewish History	Spring 2009	Upper division	27
Modern Jewish History	Spring 2009	Lower division	37
American Jewish history	Fall 2009	Upper division	75
Jewish Immigrant Experience Since 1881	Fall 2009	Upper division	17
Modern Jewish History (2 sections)	Spring 2010	Lower division	66
		Total:	271
<b>University of Delaware</b>			
Introduction to Judaism	Fall 2008	Lower division	9
Introduction to Jewish History	Fall 2008	Lower division	7
Introduction to Judaism	Spring 2009	Lower division	13
Issues and Ideas in Jewish Studies	Spring 2009	Lower division	26
Introduction to Jewish Sources	Spring 2009	Upper division	11
Introduction to Judaism	Fall 2009	Lower division	10
Jewish Philosophy	Fall 2009	Lower division	36
Jewish Philosophy	Spring 2010	Lower division	50
Sociology of Religion	Spring 2010	Upper division	41
Issues and Ideas in Jewish Studies	Spring 2010	Lower division	12
		Total:	215