

Academics

The span of our academic curriculum, in depth, breadth and methodology goes far beyond that of classic Orthodox rabbinical schools. Talmud and Halakha form the core of the curriculum and are strongly supplemented with classes in Tanakh and Jewish Thought. Classical approaches to subject matters are complemented with academic and innovative methodologies. Our overall goal is to create knowledgeable, broadminded and critical-thinking Torah scholars, halakhic decisors and spiritual leaders.

TALMUD

The goal of the Talmud curriculum is to produce Torah scholars (talmidei chakhamim) who are both fluent in Talmud and its medieval commentators (rishonim) and who can look at these texts from a variety of vantage points.

The core Talmud classes focus on conceptual issues (lomdus), integrating methodologies that address historical and source-critical concerns such as strata, composition and textual variants. Students are required to devote three full years of peer (chavruta) study to mastering classical Talmudic tractates. Our enrichment classes include "Academic Talmud," "Literary Approaches to Aggadata," and "Methodologies of Talmud Study." HALAKHA

Our Halakha curriculum aims to create knowledgeable, empathic halakhic decisors (poskim), who are skilled in the science and art of halakhic decision-making and who use mature judgment in rendering halakhic rulings.

Our students devote three years to the study of Yoreh Deah, Shabbat, Niddah, and Aveilut. These topics are taught by seasoned poskim in a comprehensive manner, analyzing the sources from the Talmud through its commentators, Shulchan Arukh, and classical and modern responsa. At the end of their study of Yoreh Deah, our students are given the opportunity to prepare for the ordination exams of the Israeli Rabbinat. Our traditional curriculum is supplemented with classes in contemporary halakhic topics, focusing on medical and business ethics, and a class in the history of Halakha. YCT also offers enrichment classes, including "Halakha and Legal Theory," "Responsa Literature," and workshops in halakhic decision-making. TANAKH

We believe that the study of Tanakh is an integral component of talmud Torah and critical to nurturing our spiritual and moral character.

Each semester, both survey (bekiut) courses and in-depth electives are offered. Students are required to take a total of six electives in Tanakh over the course of their four years. Some of these classes are devoted to classical commentaries (parshanut), others focus on the academic issues of authorship, structure and purpose, and still others delve into the literary-theological message of the text. JEWISH THOUGHT

The goal of our Jewish Thought curriculum is to develop rabbis whose world view is nurtured by traditional Jewish texts and who are critical thinkers with intellectual integrity. Our rabbis will be able to openly engage the challenges that the modern and postmodern world presents to a life of faith and religious commitment.

Survey courses examine a wide range of topics from a variety of perspectives: Biblical, rabbinic, medieval, kabbalistic, Hassidic, modern, postmodern and non-Orthodox. In-depth seminars focus both on specific areas of thought, such as prayer, Jewish ethics, and feminism, and on specific thinkers, such as Maimonides, Yehudah HaLevi and Rav Soloveitchik. All classes include readings of primary texts as well as relevant secondary sources. Two required classes of note are "The Rise and Development of Jewish Denominations" and "The Challenges of Modern Orthodoxy." The latter class addresses contemporary issues such as: dogma and doubt, academic Bible and Talmud study, the nature and scope of rabbinic authority, the role of values in halakhic decision making and gender issues. ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Our entire curriculum is taught at the highest levels of academic excellence by leading talmidei chakhamim and scholars to an outstanding student body. All of our students who have taken the Israeli Rabbinat ordination exam, universally recognized as the most demanding in the world, passed on their first attempt.