

# Interreligious Education & US Rabbinical Schools

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## Introduction

US rabbis are today working in a highly diverse and fluid national religious culture.<sup>1</sup> In chat rooms, hospitals, college dorms, and family tables across the country, Jews are interacting with people from different religions with greater frequency and with fewer barriers than in past ages.<sup>2</sup> For rabbis to work successfully in this dynamic social milieu, they need training to deal with a complex set of interreligious matters (or issues with substantive interreligious dimensions), ranging from intermarriage, to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, to the decline of religious affiliation among many American millennials, to anti-Semitism and other forms of bigotry.<sup>3</sup> As Diana Eck has written, the sheer fact of demographic diversity does not mean that people will interact with one another across religious lines in thoughtful and productive ways, particularly in times of anxiety, scarcity, or conflict. Developing and sustaining such an ethos—what Eck refers to as “religious pluralism”<sup>4</sup>—requires thoughtful leadership. Like other elements of leadership development, there are key skills, virtues, and knowledge<sup>5</sup> that rabbis must cultivate to be effective actors in the interfaith<sup>6</sup> sphere.

There is not only a need to train rabbis in this field because of pressing societal issues relating to religious diversity, but also because interreligious education can help students grow as Jewish seekers and leaders. As I will argue below, when engaged in thoughtful interreligious initiatives, seminarians have the opportunity to clarify and deepen their own beliefs and values, and to hone their visions and communication skills. By learning about other religious traditions and with people who practice them, rabbinical students can gain important knowledge and insight and become more reflective and articulate teachers, preachers, and pastors. They can also learn how to help educate non-Jews about Judaism and serve as representatives of, and advocates for, our community.<sup>7</sup>

In this brief essay, I outline several key components that I believe are essential to interreligious education for future American rabbis.<sup>8</sup> Before delving into this discussion, however, it is important to state that there are some significant challenges to implementing a meaningful interreligious educational agenda into the contemporary rabbinical school curriculum. In speaking with administrators and faculty from several different seminaries, they repeatedly raise the issue of *time*. The existing curricula in all of the schools I am familiar with—across the denominational and nondenominational spectrum—are already very full. Further, in many of the non-Orthodox schools, students necessarily spend a great deal of time developing basic language and classical text skills, since they often enter these programs with limited prior Jewish learning. Where can one fit in courses in interfaith dialogue or comparative theology when already there is not enough time for Tanakh, Talmud, Halakhah, and the like? In speaking with students, another dimension of the time dilemma emerges: many of them come to rabbinical school after spending long periods in non-Jewish (mostly secular) environments, and they now seek a deep immersion in Jewish religious life for personal and professional growth. As such, they do not necessarily see engagement in interfaith educational activities as being crucial at this point in their journeys.

Compounding the problem further is the fact that the interfaith engagement is still emerging as a discrete subject area in academia and in religious leadership training programs.<sup>9</sup> It is also an interdisciplinary field that includes several different foci: theology, history, text study, dialogue, etc. There is a limited body of scholarly literature on interreligious education in

general, and for religious leadership development specifically.<sup>10</sup> There are even fewer such resources designed by and for Jewish educators, including those working in rabbinical schools. The number of scholars and/or professionals working on interfaith educational initiatives in Jewish seminaries is also quite small. As a result, we do not yet have a sophisticated language of discourse—gleaning from both Jewish sources and other relevant fields—or established curricular norms and standards. While this field has grown considerably in the past decade,<sup>11</sup> it is still at an early stage of development. All of this makes it challenging to advocate for the implementation of an interreligious educational agenda in a context in which there are already significant curricular pressures and time constraints.

In light of these challenges, we need to think strategically about how to integrate interfaith learning in our rabbinical schools. In addition to introducing new academic and co-curricular activities, consideration should be given to drawing out salient interreligious issues within existing courses.<sup>12</sup> Internships in such locations as hospitals, social justice organizations, or prisons provide powerful opportunities to work with people from different religious and secular walks of life, and to reflect on these encounters as spiritual and moral leaders-in-training.<sup>13</sup> Using informal educational programs such as orientations, retreats, seminars, and guest lectures can also be useful opportunities for focused interreligious learning. In such cases, educators need to think carefully about how to link these special events to the day-to-day life of our schools. Finally, in articulating the need for interreligious education in Jewish seminaries, we should observe how other, relatively new fields of study and practice, like clinical pastoral care or community organizing (both of which also share various elements in common with interfaith education) have been integrated into rabbinical school curricula.

### **Learning *About* & Learning *With***

While in an ideal situation, it would be valuable to provide rabbinical students with introductory courses to several of the world's religions, given the curricular pressures discussed above, I think it is important to begin with Christianity and Islam. Why? We live in a country in which the majority of its citizens are Christian and whose culture has been profoundly shaped by Christianity. Judaism and Christianity also share common foundational texts and emerged out of the same cultural milieu.<sup>14</sup> In the case of both Christianity and Islam, our extensive interactions over the centuries require us to learn about the similarities and differences across these traditions and the influences each has had on the other. We also need to honestly examine the extensive histories of violence and oppression as well as models of interreligious cooperation among members of the Abrahamic<sup>15</sup> traditions. With Islam, we also have the opportunity to explore our shared situation as minority communities in the US, and the similarities and differences in this context, too. The need to learn about Islam is intensified because of the widespread fear and mistrust of Muslims in the Jewish community and in broader American life,<sup>16</sup> resulting from ongoing hostilities between Israel and her Arab neighbors—including, but not limited to, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—terrorist activities carried out by radical Muslim groups in the US and elsewhere, and negative depictions of Arabs and Muslims in popular Western culture.<sup>17</sup>

Learning *about* the religious other is necessary but insufficient. It must be complemented with, as Mary Boys and Sara Lee call it, “learning in the presence of the other.” As these two pioneering interfaith educators write, “Our goal is to transcend learning... in the abstract,” and to facilitate person-to-person encounters between Jews and Christians. For rabbis to be effective actors in the interreligious sphere they need to understand the ways in which actual Christians and others embody their religious traditions, gaining insight into what are the animating questions, fears, hopes, and dreams of religious people searching for meaning and

purpose in today's world. This kind of dialogical learning can only take place in the presence of the other.<sup>18</sup> While one time and short-term encounters can be powerful educational experiences that ignite or fortify one's commitment to this work, I advocate for the development of longer-term initiatives whenever possible, as these allow participants to cultivate deeper relationships with one another and to extend their learning.

Related to the previous point, it is important for Jewish seminarians to learn with peers from other religious traditions who are also preparing for leadership roles in their respective communities. This provides students with the opportunity to explore a range of religious and professional matters, participating in what my colleague, Dr. Jennifer Peace, describes as experiences of "co-formation."<sup>19</sup> These encounters can also help the aspiring Jewish leader to begin creating networks of interreligious peers whom they can call on in the future for support and advice, and with whom they can engage in cooperative ventures. Seminary faculty can serve as important role models and guides in these contexts by working with students and with non-Jewish colleagues to facilitate various courses and programs for students, faculty, and other key constituents.<sup>20</sup>

One valuable Jewish model of relational learning that we can draw on in the interreligious context is that of *havruta* study. This classical rabbinic mode of dialogical peer learning (and various contemporary adaptations of it) invites participants to share in study and conversation about issues of ultimate concern. Further, in presenting stories about various *havruta* partners—Rav and Shmuel or Hillel and Shammai—the sages express the value of relational learning and its value in building sacred community.<sup>21</sup> While there are obvious differences between intra-Jewish and interreligious learning situations, the following reflection from Diana Eck on interreligious dialogue serves to demonstrate the similarities between these two phenomena:

The language of pluralism is that of *dialogue* and encounter, give and take, criticism and self-criticism. Dialogue means both speaking and listening, and that process reveals both common understandings and real differences. Dialogue does not mean everyone at the "table" will agree with one another. Pluralism involves the commitment to being at the table—with one's commitments.<sup>22</sup>

To anyone familiar with traditional *havruta* study, Eck's statement about the dynamics of interfaith dialogue sounds a familiar note. Some of my own richest interreligious learning has taken place in the context of *havruta* learning, and it has been a helpful pedagogic tool in teaching students from different traditions.<sup>23</sup>

## **Theologies of Interreligious Engagement**

Abraham Joshua Heschel once said that "faith" must proceed "interfaith."<sup>24</sup> While the faith journey has no end, and we cannot wait to engage in interreligious activities until we resolve all of our theological quandaries, rabbis-in-training need to develop working theological narratives that help undergird their work in the interfaith sphere. How do they understand the relationship between God, the Jewish people, and peoples of other religious traditions? What are the key Jewish texts—ancient and modern—that they draw on to help articulate their beliefs? How do they understand such foundational theological categories as revelation, covenant, and chosenness in light of their experiences with non-Jewish friends, neighbors, and coworkers? How do they respond to negative portrayals of non-Jews and of non-Jewish religious traditions in various influential Jewish textual sources?<sup>25</sup> Eboo Patel offers a helpful definition of a theology of "interreligious cooperation": "By *theology*, I mean a coherent narrative that

references key scriptures, stories, history, poetry, and so on, from the cumulative historical tradition of the faith community.” As Patel goes on to say, “Our challenge is to make those pieces salient, interpret and apply them to the contemporary dynamic of religious diversity...”<sup>26</sup> While there are still a relatively small number of modern Jewish theological works that deal with interreligious issues in a sustained manner, the situation is changing with several new resources emerging in just the last few years.<sup>27</sup> We can also make use of the extensive body of Christian theological literature on interreligious engagement written in recent decades.<sup>28</sup>

### **Teaching Judaism to Non-Jews, Engaging Non-Jewish Wisdom with Jews**

If rabbis are going to serve as effective leaders in interfaith contexts, they need to be able to articulate their values, beliefs, and commitments in a language that is accessible to others unfamiliar with Judaism. Further, it is crucial that as representatives of Judaism, rabbis can contextualize their particular choices within larger historical and contemporary Jewish currents. Not only is this important in terms of providing non-Jewish dialogue partners with basic Jewish knowledge, but it also serves to demonstrate that Judaism is, as Mordecai Kaplan<sup>29</sup> famously described it, “an evolving civilization” with a rich multi-vocal tradition that continues to grow and change within and across the generations. While none of us can speak on behalf of Judaism as a whole, we must offer others insight into various dimensions of our sacred traditions, providing them with resources for further learning, and helping people understand why we practice as we do. In so doing, rabbis can serve as both ambassadors of Judaism and as witnesses to their individual Jewish lives. By learning how to articulate their religious values and ideals to non-Jews, seminarians can also refine their own thinking and improve their communication skills. Rabbinical students are regularly thinking about how to engage with Jewish constituents who possess limited knowledge of, or experience with, Jewish religious life and practice. While these situations are certainly not the same, some of the same pedagogic strategies can be used in Jewish and interreligious contexts.<sup>30</sup>

On the flipside, rabbis also need to explore how one can thoughtfully incorporate teachings and practices from other traditions into the life of a community, and what are the limits of such acts of adaptation. For example, should a synagogue incorporate a particular meditation practice from Buddhism, a liturgical selection from Catholicism, or a movement exercise from Hinduism? If so, what alterations might be necessary and why? This not only involves a conversation about theology, but also about ritual practice, aesthetics, and the appropriate mechanisms (halakhic or otherwise) for introducing change in community. This kind of interreligious “borrowing” happens regularly across traditions and has been going on in different ways for centuries; the challenge is for us to be as thoughtful about it as possible. It can be helpful to explore with students past examples of religious adaptation—philosophical, liturgical, social, etc.—by Jews and the challenges and outcomes of such attempts. For example, how did Maimonides integrate Greek and Muslim thought into his philosophical system?<sup>31</sup> How did the founders of Reform and Modern Orthodoxy reshape elements of synagogue culture in light of German Protestantism?<sup>32</sup> Closer to home, how did Second Wave Jewish feminists help transform the American rabbinate using lessons learned from secular and Christian feminists, among other sources?<sup>33</sup> What can we learn from the ideas and actions of various change agents and from the responses of their communities—both positive and negative?

### **Programming & Partnerships**

Among the skills rabbis need to function as effective leaders in the interfaith realm, they must be adept at planning and facilitating meaningful programs for people from different religious traditions. What kinds of programs or projects might be most meaningful for various

groups of children, teens, or adults? Whether one is organizing a text study, volunteer program, or holiday gathering, rabbis need to think carefully about the *goals* of their interreligious engagement. Are we bringing people together for theological discussion, relationship building, or to attend to a civic or social issue of common concern? Of course, it is possible to achieve more than one of these aims through a given initiative, but one must be deliberate in setting out his or her goals and developing programs that reflect these priorities. Here Boys and Lee offer us candid insight into this issue:

Both of us have been to sessions advertised as “dialogues” when those who attend have virtually no opportunity to interact with each other, or even to learn the names of those around them. Merely listening to the same speaker or panel of speakers and having opportunity to ask questions after the presentation might at best constitute a prelude to dialogue.”<sup>34</sup>

This is not simply a criticism of the promotion of this event, but a reminder to educators that we must be thoughtful about the goals, design, *and* promotion of our interfaith activities.

Jewish leaders must develop networks of colleagues from other religious traditions who are similarly committed to interreligious engagement. This requires an investment in developing relationships with clergy and lay leaders and making a shared commitment to help cultivate an ethos of interfaith cooperation in their communities. This work requires time and patience, and a willingness to persevere through challenging interpersonal or group experiences. The more religious leaders can learn about the needs and wants of the other communities, the more effective their interreligious work will be. The deeper one’s relationship is with leaders and key stakeholders from other communities, the less likely it is that an issue will arise without warning. It is also more likely that the leaders will be able to work together productively to solve problems when they do occur based on existing knowledge, past experience, and trust in and commitment to their partners.<sup>35</sup>

### **Curricular Suggestions**

Having outlined some of the conceptual elements of interreligious education in American rabbinical schools, below I offer some concrete suggestions for academic courses and related co-curricular activities. In making these recommendations, I draw on my experience as an educator at Hebrew College (HC) and Andover Newton Theological School (ANTS) over the last decade. I have developed much of this work with colleagues from both schools under the auspices of CIRCLE, our joint center for interfaith learning and leadership.<sup>36</sup> I also incorporate insights and recommendations from several colleagues from other seminaries and interreligious organizations with whom I have had the privilege to work. The list below is *not* intended to be comprehensive, but rather suggestive. Further, I have not created a specific sequence, but invite readers to think about how these might be used individually or in combination as the basis for an area of concentration, a certificate program, or an MA in interreligious education or the like.

- **Introductions to Christianity and Islam** – As stated above, I believe that we need to offer our students introductions to the other Abrahamic traditions. In designing such courses, it would be helpful to include periodic engagement with leaders, professional and volunteer—of their communities to allow students to encounter a range of voices from within a given tradition. If these interactions were to include Christians and Muslims who are also preparing for religious leadership roles this would enrich the conversation significantly, as students could discuss a variety of religious and vocational

matters with their peers. Even better would be a situation in which there was a Christian or Muslim cohort of leaders-in-training studying about Judaism at the same time as the rabbinical students were learning about Christianity or Islam, and the groups came together at various points over the semester (in person or through video conference) to explore key issues.

- **Joint Courses** – Team-taught courses for students from different religious communities (roughly equal numbers, if possible) can provide the opportunity to focus on a specific topic of relevance to all of the participants. One course I have co-taught several times with my colleague at ANTS, Gregory Mobley, is “The Book of Job & the Problem of Evil in Jewish & Christian Thought.” This class allowed us to delve into a classical text shared by our communities that was not otherwise covered in our respective curricula and to explore (in chronological fashion from the Bible through contemporary times) a variety of approaches to the issue of theodicy—a key theme in both traditions and a significant issue for religious leaders—including poetry, music, painting, and film.<sup>37</sup> One key element to this course was the requirement that students participate in interreligious *havruta* partnerships between sessions.
- **Religious Leadership Seminar** – In this hybrid course, students have the opportunity to explore the contemporary American religious landscape, meet religious leaders working in different interreligious contexts—college campuses, hospitals, prisons, environmental and social justice organizations—and examine a variety of real-world case studies. This is a context in which students can begin to envision working in the field, facing various interreligious challenges, and participating in the growth and development of the interreligious movement. Including an internship component in this course can help bring several of the theoretical issues to life and allow students to exercise their leadership skills.
- **Clinical Pastoral Care** – These training programs often include internship experiences in which students interact with patients from different backgrounds (religious and secular) and learn with and from non-Jewish peers in leadership formation. Every year, my students report that these programs are among the most powerful interreligious learning experiences because of the combination of student-patient engagement, and the opportunity for extensive religious and vocational reflection with a small interreligious cohort of fellow students and a supervisor with extensive field and teaching experience. One pragmatic advantage of the CPE units is that they can be taken during the summer when regular classes are not in session and there is an opportunity for an immersive experience. Connecting these intensive courses to the broader curriculum is an important pedagogic challenge.
- **Israel Program** – Many Jewish seminaries require students to spend a semester or full academic year in Israel. If planned thoughtfully, this time abroad can serve as a powerful opportunity for students to experience life as a religious *majority*, to meet Muslims and Christians living in Israel, and to learn about the complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and about the religious dimensions of this and other regional struggles. Unfortunately, the Israel year experience is often treated in isolation from the rest of the seminary curriculum. As with the CPE experience, we need to think carefully about issues of integration: how best to prepare students for this journey, how to engage with them while away, and how to help them reenter school life and American (and American Jewish) culture.

- **Peer Groups** – Providing students with their own spaces to explore issues of common concern or interest, including text study, spiritual practice, vocational concerns, and social and environmental responsibility. At HC and ANTS, we have created an interfaith fellowship program for students through CIRCLE. Two students (in *havruta*) from each school pair to create a research project or to lead a peer group and invite others (usually 8-10 total) to join them for study, discussion, or volunteer service once monthly. CIRCLE provides student fellows with stipends and each group with a modest budget for food and supplies. The fellows also facilitate sessions for the broader student bodies during a daylong program called “Community Day,” in which the faculty and students from ANTS and HC engage in a variety of activities together. Recently, we invited emerging Muslim leaders from the Greater Boston community to serve with ANTS and HC students as interfaith fellows.<sup>38</sup> CIRCLE staff people meet with the fellows throughout the year to advise the student leaders and to gain insight from them about their peer group experiences and its implications for our broader educational agenda.

## Conclusion

Given the fact that American rabbis are working within a societal context of great religious diversity and fluidity, seminary educators need to provide students with meaningful opportunities for growth as interreligious leaders. Such learning can also help future rabbis clarify and deepen their convictions and questions, provide them with experience sharing Jewish wisdom and life experience with non-Jews, and allow them to create a network of professional colleagues with whom to engage in the future. Through such training, our students can emerge as more capable and articulate representatives of and advocates for the Jewish community. Because the contemporary rabbinical school curriculum is already so full and the field of interfaith education is relatively new, we need to be skillful in implementing new courses and related activities and lifting up important interfaith issues in existing academic frameworks. Additionally, teachers and administrators in Jewish seminaries need to make creative use of co-curricular opportunities for such learning. The goal is to help cultivate a new generation of moral and spiritual leaders who are at once deeply committed to and immersed in Jewish life and thought, and who also have the skills, virtues, and knowledge to serve effectively in interreligious settings.

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<sup>1</sup> See Diana Eck, *A New Religious America: How a “Christian Country” Has Become the World’s Most Religiously Diverse Nation* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001); and Robert Putnam and David Campbell, *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> See, Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism: A History* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 2005). See, also, the 2013 Pew study, *A Portrait of Jewish Americans*, <http://www.pewforum.org/2013/10/01/jewish-american-beliefs-attitudes-culture-survey>.

<sup>3</sup> See, Putnam and Campbell, *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us*.

<sup>4</sup> Eck provides a fuller interpretation of this term on the Pluralism Project website, [www.pluralism.org](http://www.pluralism.org). Various thinkers reflecting on religious diversity use the term “pluralism” differently. For example, compare Eck’s description with that of Paul Knitter’s in his *One Earth, Many Religions: Multifaith Dialogue & Global Responsibility* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995).

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<sup>5</sup> The formulation of these categories is influenced by the work of my colleagues Eboo Patel and Catherine Cornille. See Patel's *Sacred Ground: Pluralism, Prejudice, and the Promise of America* (Cambridge, MA: Beacon Press, 2012), and Cornille's *The Im-possibility of Interreligious Dialogue* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2008).

<sup>6</sup> Throughout this essay I use the terms "interreligious" and "interfaith" interchangeably. Others I cite prefer the term "multifaith" as it accentuates the need for the involvement of many communities in this effort.

<sup>7</sup> Justus Baird explores some of the same issues in his reflection on the need for interreligious education for American religious leaders more broadly. See his essay, "*Multifaith Continuing Education: Leading Faithfully in a Religiously Diverse World*," in *A Lifelong Call to Learn: Continuing Education for Religious Leaders*, edited by Robert E. Reber and D. Bruce Roberts (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2010), pp. 245-260.

<sup>8</sup> I wish to thank my Andover Newton Theological School (ANTS) colleagues, Jennifer Howe Peace (co-director of CIRCLE) and Gregory Mobley (co-founder of CIRCLE), for developing many of these ideas with me. I also wish to thank several Jewish colleagues working on interfaith educational initiatives in seminaries for their insights, guidance, and collegiality. These include: Justus Baird, Reuven Firestone, Alon Goshen Gottstein, Mel Gottlieb, Melissa Heller, Nancy Fuchs-Kreimer, Yehezkel Landau, Rachel Mikva, Joshua Stanton, and Burton Visotzky.

<sup>9</sup> The Christian Hospitality and Pastoral Practices undertaken by the Association of Theological Schools (the accrediting body of over 270 Christian seminaries in North America) marked an important step in the growth of this field. See, Stephen Graham's synopsis of the initiative, "[Christian Hospitality and Pastoral Practices in a Multifaith Society: An ATS Project, 2010–2012](#)," in *Theological Education* 47:1 (2012): 1-10. The 2009 study by Justus Baird and Lucinda Mosher of Auburn Theological Seminary's Center for Multifaith Education, *Beyond World Religions: The State of Multifaith Education in American Theological Schools*, provided important data on this work from educational institutions across the US. See a summary of their findings at <http://www.auburnseminary.org/seminarystudy>.

<sup>10</sup> In addition to several of the resources listed in these notes, other relevant educational materials include: [Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook](#), *God Beyond Borders: Interreligious Learning Among Faith Communities* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2014); *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots*, edited by Rebecca Kratz Mayes (Philadelphia, PA: Ecumenical Press; Temple University, 2009); *Interactive Faith: The Essential Interreligious Community-Building Handbook*, edited by Bud Heckman (Woodstock, VT: SkyLight Paths Publishing, 2008); *Building the Interfaith Youth Movement: Beyond Dialogue to Action*, edited by [Eboo Patel](#) and [Patrice Brodeur](#) (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006); Judith Bering, *Understanding Other Religious Worlds: A Guide for Interreligious Education* (Orbis Books, 2004). Recent publications focused specifically on theological education include: *Teaching Theology & Religion* 16.4, edited by Lucinda Mosher (Crawfordsville IN: Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion, 2013); *Theological Education* 47.1 (2012) and 47.2 (2013); and David A. Roozen and Heidi Hadsell, editors. *Changing The Way Seminaries Teach II: Pedagogies for Interfaith Dialogue* (Hartford, CN: Hartford Seminary, 2009). For additional resources, visit <http://www.auburnseminary.org/mfbibliography>.

<sup>11</sup> See, Justus Baird, "Multifaith Education in American Theological Schools: Looking Back, Looking Ahead," *Teaching Theology & Religion* 16.4, pp. 309-321.

<sup>12</sup> It is not a simple matter to ask faculty members, with varying levels of investment and expertise in this area, to alter their teaching. Support from administrative and academic leaders is crucial to the long-term success of this work. In this context, I wish to thank the presidents, deans, and faculty of our two schools for their ongoing engagement in shaping our interreligious

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educational agenda(s). I also wish to thank the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion for providing HC and ANTS with a generous grant in 2012 that was dedicated, in large part, to exploring with both faculties our interreligious educational priorities. For more information on this initiative, please visit

<http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/grants/article.aspx?id=25323>.

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, the reflection by Daniel A. Berman on his experience as a rabbinical student in a clinical pastoral care program at a major Boston hospital: “How We Pray,” *My Neighbor’s Faith: Stories of Interreligious Encounter, Growth, and Transformation*, edited by Jennifer Peace, Or N. Rose, and Gregory Mobley (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2012), pp. 185-187.

<sup>14</sup> See Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

<sup>15</sup> On the complicated nature of this term, see Jon Levenson, *Inheriting Abraham: The Legacy of the Patriarch in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012). Resources on the Jewish experience in Christian and Muslim societies include: Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), and Robert Chazan, *Reassessing Jewish Life in Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, *American Grace*.

<sup>17</sup> Another significant criterion for course selection and related programming might be the religious makeup of the city or township in which a school is located. Engaging local religious groups not only provides students with rich learning opportunities, but also gives the school the opportunity to play a constructive role in fostering a positive interreligious ethos in its community.

<sup>19</sup> Jennifer Peace, “The Role of Theological Seminaries in Increasing Interfaith Cooperation in the United States: The CIRCLE Program of Andover Newton Theological School and Hebrew College,” *Journal of College & Character* 12.1. Please see Dr. Peace’s response to me essay in this issue of *JIRS*.

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, the reflection by Robert Pazmino and Michael Shire about their experience co-teaching graduate students from ANTS and HC (January 2014) in this issue of *JIRS*.

<sup>21</sup> Classical reflections on the nature of havruta study include: Babylonian Talmud (BT) Ta’anit 7a, BT Shabbat 3a, and BT Kiddushin 30a-b. Among the most dramatic and heartrending tale about an ancient rabbinic havruta pair is that of Rabbi Yohanan and Reish Lakish in BT Bava Metziah 84a.

<sup>22</sup> See, [www.pluralism.org](http://www.pluralism.org).

<sup>23</sup> See Melissa Heller’s reflection on the use of havruta study in the context of co-teaching an interreligious course: “Jewish-Christian Encounter through Text: An Interfaith Course for Seminarians,” *The Journal of Interreligious Dialogue*, [www.irdialogue.org](http://www.irdialogue.org), Issue 8, February 2012, pp. 29-42.

<sup>24</sup> See Heschel’s essay, “No Religion is an Island,” in *No Religion is an Island: Abraham Joshua Heschel on Interreligious Dialogue*, edited by Harold Kasimow and Byron Sherwin (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995), p. 10. This article was originally Heschel’s inaugural lecture as the Henry Emerson Fosdick Visiting Professor at Union Theological Seminary in 1965. See, also, *Abraham Joshua Heschel Philosophy, Theology and Interreligious Dialogue*, edited by Stanislaw Krajewski and Adam Lipszyc (Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009).

<sup>25</sup> On this issue, see Robert Goldenberg, *The Nations that Know Thee Not: Ancient Jewish Attitudes Towards Other Religions* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 1998); Elliot Wolfson, *Venturing Beyond: Law and Morality in Kabbalistic Mysticism* (Oxford University Press, 2006); and Robert Eisen, *The Peace and Violence of Judaism: From the Bible to Modern Zionism* (Oxford University Press, 2009). See, also the Jewish theological works listed below.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>27</sup> The following is a list (in alphabetical order of author or editor) of recent works—academic and popular—I have used in my teaching and writing: Alan Brill, *Judaism and World Religions: Encountering Christianity, Islam and Eastern Traditions* (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012); Alon Goshen-Gottstein and Eugene Korn, editors, *Jewish Theology and World Religions* (Oxford, UK: Littman Library Of Jewish Civilization, 2012); Reuven Firestone, *Who Are the Real Chosen People?: The Meaning of Chosenness in Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 2010); Michael Kogan, *Opening the Covenant: A Jewish Theology of Christianity* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007); and Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, *The Dignity of Difference* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2002). I have also made extensive use of earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century Jewish theological writings relating to interfaith engagement by Martin Buber; Arthur Cohen; Elliot Dorff; Arthur Green; Irving Greenberg; David Hartman; Abraham Joshua Heschel; Mordecai Kaplan; David Novak; Judith Plaskow; Zalman Schachter-Shalomi; Joseph B. Soloveitchik; and Michael Wyschogrod.

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, the work of Michael Barnes; Francis X. Clooney; John Cobb; Catherine Cornille; Gavin D’Costa; Jacques Dupuis; Jeannine Hill Fletcher; Paul Griffiths; Stanley Hauerwas; John Hick; Mark Heim; Paul Knitter; George Lindbeck; Hans Kung; Brian McLaren; Raimon Panikkar; Peter C. Phan; Karl Rahner; Leonard Swidler; John Thatamanil; David Tracy; Miroslav Volf; and Amos Yong.

<sup>29</sup> On Kaplan’s life and work, see Mel Scult, *The Radical American Judaism of Mordecai M. Kaplan* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013)

<sup>30</sup> Of course, with high levels of intermarriage in the American Jewish community, many rabbis regularly address non-Jews alongside Jews in their synagogues and in other Jewish communal contexts.

<sup>31</sup> See Moshe Halbertal, *Maimonides: Life and Thought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).

<sup>32</sup> See the relevant selections in Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2010 edition), chapters IV-VI.

<sup>33</sup> See, Pamela Nadell, *Women Who Would Be Rabbis: A History of Women’s Ordination 1889-1985* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1998), chapters 4-5.

<sup>34</sup> M. Boys and S. Lee, *Christians & Jews in Dialogue: Learning in the Presence of the Other*, p. 96.

<sup>35</sup> See *American Grace*. See, also, [Ashutosh Varshney](#), *Ethnic Conflict: Hindus and Muslims in India* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 2003).

<sup>36</sup> One issue we regularly discuss in this educational partnership is which pedagogic practices (form and content) we share in common and which differ based on the history and dynamics of our respective communities, the missions of our schools, and the needs of our students.

<sup>37</sup> See my brief reflection on this teaching experience: “Descending from Mount Moriah: A Reflection on Interfaith Study,” in *Tikkun Magazine*, Winter 2011, <http://www.tikkun.org/nextgen/descending-from-mount-moriah-a-reflection-on-interfaith-study>.

<sup>38</sup> Through a generous grant from the Henry Luce Foundation, the two schools were able to jointly hire Celene Ibrahim-Lizzio as the first visiting scholar in Islamic Studies and co-director of CIRCLE. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, Ms. Lizzio is helping CIRCLE develop new educational programs for Muslim students and professionals, create strategic partnerships with Muslim organizations, and expand our interfaith offerings. Please see Ms. Lizzio’s response to my essay in this issue of *JIRS*.