

BCHSJS - SPRING 2019

SUNDAY COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Period 1

Angels and Demons

grades 8-9 Period 1

Ms. Tova Sklar

What are angels? Does heaven and hell exist? Are we deluding ourselves by believing in the Messiah? Do I actually have a soul? Together we will explore these “out-there questions”, using different sources and videos to explain these mystical concepts. We will compare the Jewish view to the understanding put forth by the movie industry, and see if pop culture’s take on the “spiritual world” is in line with our beliefs.

Avengers Assemble: A Study of the Marvel Jewniverse

grades 9-12 Period 1

Ms. Yardená Bannett

Are you a fan of the Marvel Universe? Then come and study the Marvel “Jew”niverse! In this fun and interactive class, we will be exploring characters such as Captain America, Iron Man, and the Hulk, finding out what they can teach us and what Judaism has to say about their personalities and powers!

Do not register for this class if you took it in the fall.

The Ethicist

grades 9-12 Period 1

Dr. Daniel Rynhold

You rent a house with some other students who give you permission to host a party. After the party you discover that a housemate has borrowed a bike and left it in a downstairs hallway. The bike has been vandalized, presumably by a party guest. Given that no one will confess to the crime, are you responsible for the repairs? Every weekend, the New York Times Magazine article *The Ethicist* takes a moral dilemma like this and offers an answer. Taking some of the very same dilemmas as our starting point, we will explore what a Jewish perspective can add to the discussion. *Former students may enroll in this class again as there are all new issues.*

Fact or Fiction?

grades 8-9 Period 1

Rabbi Gary Hoffman

Join us as we travel throughout the world with scientists and archaeologists as well as with Biblical scholars in search of the mythical and exotic. We will examine Jewish primary and secondary textual sources as well as view videos about the Garden of Eden, Noah’s Ark, the real “sin cities” of Sodom and Gemorrah, the splitting of the Red Sea, the Ark of the Covenant, Solomon’s Gold, the Queen of Sheba, the Ten Lost Tribes as well as the Bible Codes. This promises to be an exciting and informative experience with much lively discussion.

Jewish Infused Improv ++

grades 9-12 Period 1

Dr. Mark Silk

Using Judaic content, strengthen your skills and broaden your repertoire in this advanced improv class. *This course is open to students with prior improv experience at BCHSJS or with the instructor’s permission.*

Jewsic

grades 8-9 Period 1

Ms. Rivka Herzfeld

The Jewish people have always had a connection to music – from the time we were singing at the Red Sea to Moses’ writing his last song to us, or when we express our love to G-d through the *Song of Songs*. We will be looking at songs spanning different musical genres to find Jewish meaning in them so that when we listen to our favorite songs, it is an elevated, impactful experience!

Period 1 - Continued

Learning Through the Cinematic Lens II

grades 9-12 Period 1

Mr. Bruce Prince

Learning through a visual narrative offers a series of layers that will enhance your process of learning. We all know the adage that states: "A picture is worth a thousand words." We will learn to understand just how true this is. Here's some of the films (or clips) that will help us learn how to "read" a movie" - Schindler's List; Shoah; Annie Hall; A Serious Man; Exodus; Crossing Delancey; the Golem; Devil's Arithmetic....

Open to all students whether you took Part I in the fall or not.

Senior Seminar

**grade 12
Required**

Period 1

Mr. Barnett Goldman

Mandatory for all high school seniors. This course will challenge students to think about their own Jewish identity. Where do they fit in the American Jewish experience and how will religion play a part in their lives in the future? We will prepare you for the potential challenges you will face as a Jew on your college campus, including handling anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism on the college campus, and we will also help you process the end of a great journey through BCHSJS and your path following high school. We will help prepare you for your life ahead while setting the groundwork for staying in touch in college and beyond.

Period 2

Absolut Torah

grades 10-12 Period 2

Ms. Tova Sklar

A great 11th commandment would be, "Though Shalt Drink Wine and Feast Whenever Possible." In our practices, wine and food play a large role! However, they must be used in moderation. Together, we'll learn Biblical stories about people who struggled to find a healthy balance of wine consumption, and the consequences that emerged. We'll also explore the different contexts in which wine and food are used to celebrate today, and how people who are underage can find other ways to bring out joy in each holiday.

Food, Glorious Food: One Blessing or Two?

grades 9-12 Period 2

Dr. Mark Silk

We all need food to survive. Some of us really enjoy eating. We will explore how the Rabbis of the Mishnah sought to raise the act of eating something even more important than satisfying one's taste buds by studying Chapter 6 of Mishna Brachot.

The Holocaust Through the Eyes of Maus II

grades 8-9 Period 2

Dr. Daniel Rynhold

Art Spiegelman's Pulitzer prize winning book *Maus* is one of many works about the Holocaust. But *Maus* is unique in being a graphic novel – ok, it's a comic strip – that depicts Jews as mice, and Nazis as cats. We will be studying *Maus* to learn about the Holocaust through one man's experience while also raising questions about appropriate ways of preserving the memory of the Holocaust in art – whether in novels, films, painting, or historical research. *This course is a continuation of the fall semester. New students are welcome.*

The "New" You! Reincarnation and Resurrection

grades 8-9 Period 2

Rabbi Gary Hoffman

One of the common misconceptions that Jewish people have about Judaism is that reincarnation is totally alien to Jewish thought. But Judaism actually affirms belief in reincarnation whereby the soul returns to the world to live a new life. After that life is over there is the "World to Come" which is a time and place for our experiencing a closeness to God based upon the actions and choices we made during our lifetime. Ultimately, the body will be resurrected, and the soul will be reunited with the body to experience a new dimension of reality. Our conversations will address such issues as: How does reincarnation work? Can a person be reincarnated as an animal? Are there findings in modern science that confirm the belief in reincarnation? We will also grapple with the problems of why bad things happen to good people, premature death, physical and mental disabilities, and more.

"Pinteresting" Quotes

grades 10-12 Period 2

Ms. Yardena Bannett

In this engaging and interactive class, we will be exploring a different quote each week. From Proverbs to Einstein and everything in between, we will study some of the best Jewish themed quotes, gaining knowledge and inspiration along the way!

Putting the "Social" into Social Action

grades 8-9 Period 2

Mr. Barnett Goldman

Young adults are constantly leading the charge in changing the world. This interactive class will teach you what it takes to create great programs, raise money for organizations, and start your very own organization, movement, or program. We will hear from the pros about being part of a great cause and see phenomenal examples right in front of us. If you are looking to make the world a better place, or just looking to make a difference, this is the class for you.

That Was the Week That Was

grades 10-12 Period 2

Mr. Bruce Prince

Not a week goes by without a major catastrophe, and there are dozens of news reporting agencies that will report on each and every one. However, they all seem to tell a different story of the same news event. A wise man used to say, "There are three parts to every story: Yours, mine, and the third that is usually somewhere in between." Are there reporters that can provide an unbiased report? How do so many world events involve Israel? We'll learn how to sift through the layers of truthiness and develop an appreciation for truth, justice, and the American way. *Former students may enroll in this class again.*

Torah Through Storytelling+

grades 8-9 Period 2

Ms. Rivka Herzfeld

There are some really fascinating and action-packed stories throughout the Bible, but often, we don't consider the human perspective behind our predecessors' actions. We'll discuss a story, which you can then reimagine through a modern skit, a spoken-word poem, a song or a dance, reimagining the stories that we know and love, with a "real" contemporary perspective.

Period 3

A True Beleiber: Finding Jewish Faith Through Popular Music

grades 8-9 Period 3

Ms. Yardena Bannett

From Taylor to Bruno to Eminem, music is a powerful tool that we use to convey important messages. Let's listen to the artists and their songs and discuss themes which either relate to or go against the Jewish tradition.

Israel: Current Events and Controversies

grades 10-12 Period 3

Dr. Mark Silk

It's not just falafel and a free trip abroad. We will explore challenging issues facing Israel in 2019 and beyond. Some of the questions we will debate include: Should Israel exchange land for peace? What role should the settlements have in the future of Israel? What does it mean to be both a Jewish and a democratic state?

I've Got A Feeling

grades 8-9 Period 3

Ms. Tova Sklar

Ever felt love? Anger? Hunger? Or plain old satisfaction? Different emotions brew inside constantly. For every feeling (almost) there's a time and a place, and Jewish sources have a lot to say about them. We will learn which scenarios past Jewish characters have succeeded and failed when channeling certain emotions. We'll refer to modern songs, movie clips, and ancient texts to better understand the role of feelings within modern society.

Jewish Volunteer Corp

grades 9-12 Period 3

Mr. Barnett Goldman

In the Jewish tradition, there is a mitzvah to honor the elderly. In this service-learning class, we will learn together as well as be actively involved in volunteering with a group of seniors. Some of our class sessions will take place (during school hours - transportation provided) at The Daughters of Miriam. We will build relationships with a group of seniors and learn their Jewish histories. This class is for those who want to make a difference for the young at heart and to build a bridge to the generations that came before us. *New students are welcome.*

Judaism in the Modern World

grades 10-12 Period 3

Dr. Daniel Rynhold

Up to the eighteenth century, Jews pretty much knew where they stood. With some regional variations they shared a core of central beliefs and practices. Jews knew what it was to be Jewish, even if a hostile non-Jewish environment sometimes made life difficult for them. Now, Jews flourish in the world around them. They can enter into every aspect of society. Yet what it means to be Jewish is a very complicated matter. There are Orthodox Jews, Conservative Jews, Reform Jews, Reconstructionist Jews, Secular Jews, and so the list goes on. So what changed? We will trace how the changes in the wider civil and political world led to the emergence of the varieties of modern Judaism that we encounter today. *This is a continuation from the fall semester. New students are welcome.*

Rabbis in Residence

grades 10-12 Period 3

Rabbi Dr. David Fine and other local Rabbis

Study with various area rabbis on their approach to Judaism, what challenges they grapple with, and how they respond to our concerns. Students are encouraged to ask tough questions. *This is a continuation from the fall semester. New students are welcome.*

Period 3 - Continued

Scandal! - Shocking Stories in the Bible

grades 10-12 Period 3

Ms. Rivka Herzfeld

Murder! Kidnapping! Stealing! Adultery! Rape! Rebellion! These are some of the snapshot headlines that some of the stories would get if they were featured in a newspaper. We'll look at some of these scandalous stories, and learn why they may not be so outrageous after all.

You Be The Judge IV

grades 8-9 Period 3

Mr. Bruce Prince

Morality and ethics are barometers for choosing a path of goodness. As our world seemingly is becoming smaller, our understanding of right and wrong becomes harder to distinguish the difference between them. We will be learning to make the right calls by example. Our text: You Be the Judge IV provides examples and possible solutions from a Jewish "Halachic" perspective on each case. Each student will have an opportunity to weigh in on each case study, as well. *You may enroll in this class if you took You Be the Judge previously as this semester we are using a new book.*

The Week in Review

grades 8-9 Period 3

Rabbi Gary Hoffman

The major newsworthy events of the week will be examined in light of their effects upon Israel and Jews everywhere. How do the happenings in the Middle East affect you? What happened at the White House this week? Who's who in the Jewish world? These and many more questions will be answered each week as we take an in-depth look at the world around us. *Former students may enroll in this class again.*