

# Course Catalog



*Bergen County High School of Jewish Studies*

# Fall 2020

## WHY COME TO BCHSJS?

Engage in  
Passionate Learning  
Discuss what really matters  
to YOU with open-minded  
teachers. Hang out with  
your old friends and make  
new ones! Discover a safe  
place to find out who you  
really are.  
Change the World!

## WHAT IS BCHSJS?

It's about being with friends, learning new things,  
figuring out who you are and making a difference in a  
Jewish environment.

It's not just the classes, it's also the retreats and the  
special trips!

It's the place to be on Sunday mornings!

## WHO WILL YOU FIND AT BCHSJS?

8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Teens:

Amazing friends who will change your life!

Charismatic, Energetic, and Knowledgeable Teachers.

All Kinds of Jews!

Reform, Orthodox, Renewal, Conservative, Unaffiliated, Atheist,

Questioning, Cultural, Rebellious,

Humanist Jews, and "just Jewish" Jews... & the real you!

*"I like the teachers and the  
classes."  
Arielle Fronimos*

*"I love all the new friends that  
I made and all the trips that  
we get to go on"  
Gabby Rubin*

*"At BCHSJS we have more  
freedom and we get to  
choose our classes."  
Jillian Heit*

*"BCHSJS has been a terrific  
experience. There is a wide  
variety of engaging subjects  
and classes to pick from  
which are taught by  
involved, capable teachers.  
And there is a strong sense  
of community here. I'm very  
glad I chose to continue my  
Jewish education at  
BCHSJS."  
Sam Pitchkhadze*

*"I started out not knowing  
anyone. Now I have so  
many friends."  
Jaiden Clark*

*"It's really fun at BCHSJS. I  
met really nice/great  
friends and teachers."  
Molli Gordon*

## WEEKDAY OFFICE INFO:

475 Grove Street  
Ridgewood, NJ 07450  
Phone: 201-488-0834  
Fax: 201-488-2126  
office@bchsjs.org

## WHEN AND WHERE IS BCHSJS?

Sunday Mornings from  
11:30am – 1:30pm at  
Temple Israel & Jewish Community Center  
475 Grove Street  
Ridgewood, New Jersey 07450

Period 1  
In-  
Person Class Choices

11:30am - 12:10pm

**Ethical Driving**  
**Mr. Bruce Prince**

**Grades 10-12**

Driving ethics are defined as standards of courtesy while operating a vehicle. An example of driving ethics is avoiding cursing at people if they make an error while driving a car. The rules are expanding as we brace for an onslaught of autonomous cars. We'll discuss the moral responsibilities, mechanics and technology as we try to embrace this new frontier.

**Jews in Pop Culture**  
**Mr. Barnett Goldman**

**Grades 8-10**

The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly.....Jews in Pop-Culture. You would be surprised to know that there are so many pop-culture icons that are Jewish. We will be discussing Jewish celebrities in all walks of pop-culture and social media. Who is giving us a bad name, who is making us look good, and who is living the dream? We will have lively debates and conversations about all avenues of pop-culture and all the people who fill it.

**Jew Got Questions II**  
**Ms. Yardená Bannett**

**Grades 10-12**

Can a medical professional lie in order to protect his patient? Can you free many terrorists in order to save one soldier? Who has the right to claim the winning raffle ticket found in the trash? We will explore a fascinating array of Jewish questions, debate about the answers and discover a wealth of new information along the way! *(Students who have taken this course may repeat it as the topics/discussions will be new.)*

**Jews and Broadway**  
**Ms. Tova Sklar**

**Grades 8-10**

"To Ma'ariv, to Ma'ariv, I'm going to Ma'ariv, the start of a brand new day!" If you've seen "Annie," this may sound a bit familiar. Several Jewish spoofs have been made over the years, where artists rewrote the lyrics to some of our favorite Broadway tunes to reflect ideas about Judaism. We'll be learning about Jewish culture, mitzvot, and Torah stories, but all to the tune of Broadway classics. By the end of the course, you too will be challenged to write a song about a Jewish concept to the tune of your favorite Broadway song!

**Judaism in the Modern World**  
**Rabbi David Fine**

**Grades 10-12**

***(May be taken for Middle College Credit for additional fee of \$400 by 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> graders)***

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.

*Period 2*  
*In-Person Scheduled Social Activities*  
12:15pm - 12:45pm

**Connections Through Time**

**New Student Core Requirement**

This will be a highly interactive course for students to learn about BCHSJS, themselves, and their new classmates. Not only will there be a ton of fun activities, there will also be opportunities to explore the history, beliefs, and customs of Judaism. Look forward to some awesome projects, activities, videos, and discussions!

**Structured Breaktime Activity**

**Returning Students**

Making friends is a core part of why students love BCHSJS. Returning students will spend a half hour in a peer group by grade participating in a fun, social, SAFE activity run by our BCHSJS educators. Some examples of these activities include scavenger hunts, lawn games, ice breaker style activities, charades, and more.

*Period 3*  
*In-Person Class Choices*  
12:50pm - 1:30pm

**Avengers Assemble! A Study of the Marvel “JEW”niverse**  
**Ms. Yardena Bannett**

**Grades 8-10**

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!

**Challah Days**  
**Ms. Jessica Spiegel**

**Grades 8-10**

Every Shabbat is a Challah Day- Read and discuss the weekly parsha, and then create challah masterpieces (to be baked and eaten at home) representing the weekly Torah portion.  
Class supplies: 1 large baking sheet, 1 silpat (non-stick baking mat) , and 1-5 lb. bag of flour.

**Contemporary Issues**  
**Rabbi Gary Hoffman**

**Grades 10-12**

What does Judaism say about torturing a terrorist for information? What is the Jewish perspective on Mossad spies committing adultery to accomplish their missions? What does the Torah have to say about committing suicide to avoid suffering? What exactly is it that makes us human anyway? What do the Rabbis say about human-animal hybrid experimentation? We will use primary and secondary Jewish sources to discuss these and other fascinating contemporary topics such as: Pro-Life/Pro-Choice debate; Uber in Jewish law; contraception; is violence ever justified?

**That Was the Week that Was**  
**Mr. Bruce Prince**

**Grades 10-12**

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.*

# On-Line Class Choices

Period 1

11:30am - 12:10pm

## **Kosher Movies**

**Rabbi Gary Hoffman**

**Grades 8-9**

There are movies and television programs that have something valuable to say about the community in general and ourselves in particular. Films and television are tools for self-discovery. A "kosher movie" is a movie or television program that has something meaningful to say about life. What can Keanu Reeves teach us about being pretentious? What does Bill Maher have to say about the mitzvah of having children? What does *Wreck It Ralph* teach us about our quality of life? What does *Mr. Rodgers* have to say about Tikkun Olam? How does *Zootopia* teach us how to manage ethical challenges? What can we learn about the mitzvah of hospitality from Anthony Bourdain? Students will be challenged with these questions and more in trying to understand Jewish values, morals, and ethics in a society where personal opinions all are considered equally valid. We will grapple with the fact that there may be more than one correct answer; and there may be no answer.

## **Whose Lives Matter?**

**Ms. Avital Moss**

**Grades 10-12**

The discourse around the Black Lives Matter movement, and its counter Blue Lives Matter, have been inescapable. What does the Jewish tradition have to say about the value of a life and the extent one is supposed to go to protect it? This text-based class will explore the range of Jewish responses to ethical dilemmas that have come into focus this year such as racial equality, LGBTQ+ rights, climate change, hunger, poverty, and world peace.

Period 2

12:15pm - 12:45pm

## **Structured On-Line Breaktime Activity**

**All Online Students**

All online Students will participate in a fun, social, online activity run by our BCHSJS educators. Some examples of these activities include kahoots, charades, quizlets, 20 questions, mad libs, and more. Our online students will participate in this activity as a cohort.

Period 3

12:50pm - 1:30pm

## **The Shmooze**

**Ms. Avital Moss**

**Grades 8-10**

What is the Jewish response to issues facing teens today? Did Moses have advice on college apps? What would Leah say about the person you're dating? How do you foster a Jewish community and traditions in an untraditional virtual world? In this ever changing social environment, this discussion-based class will reference traditional Jewish texts to glean insight into today's challenges. (note: you may take this class even if you took it last semester)

## **Judges**

**Ms. Tova Sklar**

**Grades 10-12**

"During those times, there was no king in Israel. Each man did what he thought was right." This is a common refrain that appears in the *Book of Judges*. The only problem was that the Israelites did not always do what was right...Because of that, judges ruled the land and lead the nation to war. The *Book of Judges* is filled with dramatic stories involving battle, miracles, female warriors, fat kings, accidental child sacrifices, people with super strength, and civil wars. We'll watch videos and read articles that relate to these stories and apply lessons taught by different judges to our daily lives.

*The Bergen County High School of Jewish Studies is the recipient of an allocation from the Jewish Federation of Northern New Jersey.*



*We collaborate on several projects with NCSY who also provides us with a teacher.*



*The North Jersey Board of Rabbis provides us with teachers for a class.*

**NORTH JERSEY BOARD OF RABBIS**

*We collaborate on several trips and events with USY.*

