

# YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

To: Rabbi Norman Lamm

Date: 5/22/70

From: Dr. Gersion Appel

Subject: Report of Jewish Studies Review  
Committee

I am pleased to send you the final draft of our report. Corrections noted have been included but some notations, which in effect reopened issues already concluded, could not be included at this stage. (ein le-davar sof).

Again, I wish to thank you for your sincere dedication, and your willingness to endure cheerfully the many meetings that we had to schedule in order to complete our task.

Hopefully, it will bear fruit and we will achieve our commonly shared goals.



Recommendations for Jewish Studies  
At Stern College

Report of Jewish Studies Review Committee

The Jewish Studies Review Committee has conducted an intensive evaluation of Jewish studies at Stern College, as charged in its appointment, with a view toward a reorganization of the program to meet present and future needs. Having completed its deliberations, following a study of the proposals of its several sub-committees, the Committee herewith presents its recommendations.

Goals

Stern College views its primary objective to be to provide its students with "a rich background in Jewish learning and traditions," together with an education in the liberal arts and sciences. The Committee believes that to attain this objective it is necessary to afford every student the fullest opportunity for a thorough, in-depth study of Jewish thought and literature, in accordance with her educational background and capacity.

The student must be subjected to the challenge of a demanding academic discipline in Jewish studies even as she is imbued with the moral and spiritual ideals of Judaism. In a Jewish studies discipline it is essential that the student acquire a familiarity with and a mastery of basic Biblical, classical and contemporary sources, with emphasis upon textual analysis and development of the ability to utilize original sources.

It is the firm conviction of the Committee that if these goals are to be achieved the present curriculum must be expanded and improved, qualified and committed teachers added to the faculty, and sufficient time must be allotted for Jewish and Hebrew studies. It therefore submits the following proposals.

### Admission of Students

The present admissions policy should be maintained. However, the following procedure is proposed the better to assure the suitability and commitment of students enrolled in the college.

- a) Applicants should be personally interviewed. Where possible, out of town applicants should be interviewed by an admissions officer on a circuit tour of the country.
- b) Entrance examinations, both written and oral, should be administered in order to assess general knowledge, proficiency in Hebrew language and textual skill. Where appropriate, special examinations instead of the general examination can be administered.
- c) All applicants shall be required to demonstrate a minimal skill of mechanical reading and writing of Hebrew as a requisite for admission.
- d) All applicants must be approved and where possible interviewed, by the head of Jewish studies, prior to their acceptance into the college, as fulfilling the requirements for admission.

### Classification of Students

Students should be placed on one of three levels according to the following guidelines.

#### I. Advanced level (Yeshiva high school graduates)

- a) 82 average or better for high school Jewish studies
- b) 600 on Hebrew achievements
- c) either upper third of general exam, with a minimum grade in each section, or upper 2/3 on special exam.

#### II. Intermediate level (Yeshiva high school or Yeshiva elementary)

- a) 75-82 high school Jewish studies average
- b) 350-600 on Hebrew achievements
- c) middle third of general exam, with minimal grade on each section of exam.



Yeshiva students who do not meet the above standards are not to be accepted.

III. Primary level (Non-Yeshiva students)

- a) no significant Yeshiva background
- b) below 350 or no achievement
- c) bottom third of exam

Students on the Primary level should be placed in one of three graded sections on the basis of their relative skill and knowledge of the subject matter to facilitate learning as well as the progression or adjustment of the student on an individual basis.

Primary level students should be programmed for a more intensive course of study so as to enable them to reach the freshman Intermediate level after the second year, thus setting a basic, minimum standard to be achieved by all students upon graduation.

It is similarly expected that many students entering on the Intermediate level will after the first or second year proceed to the Advanced level.

Curriculum and Schedule of Courses

- I. All students must meet minimum course requirements for a total of 72 credits in Jewish and Hebrew studies, Fundamental concepts and laws, and Jewish philosophy.
- II. Non-Yeshiva students shall be placed in a Preparatory (mechinah) program designed to cultivate the necessary skills and knowledge and to prepare them for advancement to the Intermediate level. Each student shall be required to take 12 hours per semester for the first two years in an augmented course of study in the following areas:

Hebrew - 4 hours per week

Bible - 4 hours per week

Jewish laws - 2 hours per week

Jewish concepts - 2 hours per week



III. All students shall be subject to established course requirements in accordance with one of the following alternative proposals.

A. A minimum of 6 credits shall be required in each of the following areas, for a total of 30 credits.

1. Chumash and Nach
2. Halachah and Rabbinical literature
3. Fundamental Jewish concepts (machshevet Yisrael) and Jewish philosophy
4. Hebrew language and literature
5. Jewish history

B. A minimum of 6 credits shall be required in each of the following general areas of study, for a total of 18 credits.

1. Chumash and Nach
2. Halachah, Rabbinical literature, Fundamental Jewish Concepts and Jewish philosophy.
3. Hebrew language and literature, and Jewish history.

(Proposal A - Appel, Besdin, Chinn, Horowitz, Krumbein, Spatz

Proposal B - Lamm, Mirsky, Rabinowitz

Proposal A with omission of requirement in Hebrew language and literature and Jewish history - Bleich)

IV. The program shall be mandatory for all new students beginning with the 1970-71 school year. Other students presently enrolled shall be given the option of entering the new program or continuing to meet present requirements with benefit of the elective features of the program available to them.

V. Students shall be allowed to take more than the 72 credit minimum required above in accordance with one of the following alternative provisions.



- A. A maximum of 22 college credits per semester shall be allowed all students in good standing. Students who have attained a grade average of 2.7 shall be allowed a maximum of 24 college credits. The maximum may be relaxed in special cases upon approval. (Appel, Besdin, Chinn, Krumbein, Lamm, Mirsky, Rabinowitz, Spatz)
- B. There is to be no maximum credit load for Jewish studies (Bleich, Horowitz).
- VI. All credits in Jewish and Hebrew studies shall be applicable towards meeting degree requirements.
- VII. In order to enable a student to concentrate in Jewish and Hebrew studies a major should be established in this area. It is further recommended that a program be established leading toward the attainment of a second degree and designed to permit students to concentrate in Jewish and Hebrew studies, that it be built around a basic, required program of studies at Stern College, and that it make provision for the program to be extended over a five year period.
- VIII. Courses, especially in Hebrew and Bible, should be scheduled for the morning hours, (preferably from 9 to 12) to afford the student full advantage of the program without conflict and to permit for proper placement and movement from one level to another. The rest may be integrated with <sup>the</sup> general college schedule to allow for flexibility of programming for both students and faculty.
- IX. The basic program outlined above will enable every student to attain a creditable level of achievement and likewise to afford the student the opportunity to enhance her knowledge in areas of her special need and interest. Its success however depends upon two additional factors, namely, a sufficient number of sequential, readily available courses, and the high quality of the courses offered. All present courses and curricula should therefore be evaluated as to subject matter and methodology with a view to greater intensification and to improvement of quality where indicated. Elective courses should be developed and offered in order to provide for deeper study and enrichment.



## Structure and Administration

In deliberating upon the question of restructuring Jewish studies so as to obtain optimum results from the program as set forth, and in a manner best suited for Stern College, the Committee carefully weighed the following considerations:

- a) The need for a dynamic presence for Jewish studies under an academic apparatus which would afford a sufficient measure of autonomy for the program to operate effectively.
- b) The program as proposed requires that it be integrated into the college, particularly as regards the matter of credits, inter-disciplinary courses, and the establishment of a major.
- c) The recognition that the student represents a total personality, that her philosophy and outlook upon life should be one that is unified and not fragmented, and that as far as possible she be spared the pressure of divergent and competing disciplines.
- d) Preservation of the distinctive character of Stern College as a school with a united faculty and an educational program designed to transmit a knowledge of the intellectual heritage of man and the moral and spiritual values of our Jewish tradition.

### The Committee therefore recommends:

1. That there be constituted a division of Jewish studies within Stern College.
2. A head for the division shall be appointed in consultation with the dean, the Jewish Studies faculty and the students; that he shall report to the dean of Stern College and:
  - a) recommend faculty appointments;
  - b) be responsible for admission, standards and the administration of the Jewish studies program;
  - c) in conjunction with the Office of Student Services be responsible for standards of religious observance, religious guidance and services, and cultural activities.



Implementation of these recommendations for the reorganization and restructuring of Jewish studies will, we believe, enable it to realize its fullest potential and achieve the goal of Stern College --- the education of young women committed to Torah and a Torah orientation toward Jewish life and the world that stems from authentic Jewish learning.

May 7, 1970

Jewish Studies Review Committee

Dr. Gersion Appel, Chairman  
Rabbi Morris Besdin  
Rabbi David Bleich  
Miss Nechamah Chinn  
Miss Louise Horowitz  
Miss Peninah Krumbein  
Dr. Norman Lamm  
Dean David Mirsky  
Dean Jacob Rabinowitz  
Miss Chaya Spatz