The Pedagogy of B’nei Mitzvah
CG-EDUC 595 Spring 2014 – 2 credits
9:00-11:00 Thursdays
Cantor Louise Treitman
Office Hours: Wednesday, Thursday, Friday by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course is designed to enable educators working with pre-bar- and bat-mitzvah-age students to develop a curriculum to prepare them for this important lifecycle event and to develop a ceremony that reflects the individual child. Topics will include lesson planning, dealing with different learning styles, group teaching, homiletics and problem solving. The course will examine the process of this lifecycle event from a variety of viewpoints, including religious, psychological, social and historical. Participants in the course will be expected to develop a portfolio that includes lesson plans and strategies for their students. Students who are currently tutoring are encouraged to develop materials for their pupils. Prerequisites: A working understanding of cantillation; cantillation skills will not be taught in this course. Ability to read music helpful but not required.

GRADE WILL BE BASED ON:
Class participation (20%); Report on a book about b’nei mitzvah (20%); Weekly “Journal entry” updates (less than a page) on “your student” (20%); Final Paper and Presentation (40%)

DUE DATES:
Each week, update on “your student”. This will focus on weekly material. You must stay up to date on these entries.
Book report will be due on March 6th.
Presentation will be done during last sessions (March 20th and March 27th).
Final paper (program for your student) will be due on March 27th.

MATERIALS:
Putting God on the Guest List for Kids, Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin
The Book of Miracles, Rabbi Lawrence Kushner
http://www.bnaimitzvahrevolution.org
University Reader packet – will available to order on-line:
http://www.universityreaders.com/students/
Please note there are 8 class sessions

CLASS 1: February 6
Introductions and overview of material. Information about creating your “own bar/bat mitzvah candidate” as a model for the semester using Google docs.

CLASS 2: February 13
Preparation for the b’nei mitzvah year: adolescent psychology; different ways of learning. Assessing your students.

CLASS 3: February 20
Group teaching vs. Individual teaching; Lesson planning.

CLASS 4: February 27
Teaching trope to students (If you are not familiar with trope/cantillation, we will Materials. Guiding students to write a D’var Torah.

CLASS 5: March 6
Gemilut Hasadim projects – Family Education programming.
Family Issues around b’nei mitzvah
BOOK REPORT IS DUE.

CLASS 6: March 13
Preparing students for the bima; Individualizing the bar/bat mitzvah service; including a look at special needs.

CLASS 7: March 20
Technology for the synagogue. This will include technology around b’nei mitzvah teaching: websites, recording devices; on-line computer programs. Final Presentations.

CLASS 8: March 27
Final Presentations.
FINAL PROJECT/PAPER IS DUE

HOLD for make up class: April 3