Course Description:
The purpose of this course is to engage you as educators with major concepts and values of Jewish life. The course will have a dual focus: content knowledge and pedagogic application. In studying each topic, you will be asked to consider both the concepts and sources of the topic, as well as how the topic can be taught and experienced by students in various educational settings. You will have opportunities to apply your learning to the age group that you teach or direct. We will study each area using classic texts along with modern commentaries and writings. Topics will include the Jewish life cycle (birth, adoption, bar-bat mitzvah, marriage, conversion, divorce, death); values such as zedakah, relationship between parents and children, k’vod ha-beriyot, bikkur holim; and Jewish practice (kashrut, tallit and tefillin).

Learning Objectives:
At the end of this course, students should be able to:

• Describe the major concepts and practices in Jewish life cycle rituals
• Provide a rationale for potential meaning of observing various rituals
• Reflect critically on various approaches to mitzvah and Jewish values
• Offer multiple primary source bases for the life cycle and mitzvot studied
• Apply primary text material to educational settings
• Create appropriate educational activities which express key ideas in each unit
• Relate life cycle events and mitzvot to your own experiences
• Synthesize and apply one focus area in a presentation of a full educational unit

Texts & Resources:

Required Texts:
The following two texts are required for students to have during the full course. They are available on-line, or at your local Jewish book store.

• Barbara Binder Kadden and Bruce Kadden, Teaching Mitzvot (Denver: ARE/Behrman House), 2003.
• Barbara Binder Kadden and Bruce Kadden, Teaching the Life Cycle (Denver: ARE/Behrman House), 1997.

Other helpful resource books (parts of some of them may be provided for various units):

• Ronald Isaacs, Rites of Passage (Hoboken: KTAV), 1992 (very inexpensive on line if you want to buy).
• Nina Cardin, The Tapestry of Jewish Time (Springfield, N.J.: Behrman House), 2000
• Bradley Shavit Artson, It’s a Mitzvah! (New York: Behrman House), 1995.
• Susan Freeman, Teaching Jewish Virtues (Denver: ARE/Behrman House), 1999.
• Francine Klagsburn, Voices of Wisdom (New York: Pantheon), 1980.
• Relevant articles in the Encyclopedia Judaica may also be helpful.
• MyJewishLearing.com (“Life” tab); Judaism 101 http://www.jewfaq.org/index.htm for general background

Assignments & Assessment:
There will be regular postings to discussion boards, and at least 3 responses to postings expected in each unit (45 points), as well as 5 short assignments (1 page) during the semester (5x5=25 points). A final project is described at the end of the Syllabus (30 points).
Organization of Units:
Each unit will usually consist of three parts:
- Background readings
- Primary texts
- Educational application

Course Accommodations for Disabilities:
Hebrew College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in programs. Accordingly, if a student has a documented disability, and as a result, needs a reasonable accommodation to attend, participate or complete course requirements, then he or she should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. For further information, see the Student Handbook at http://hebrewcollege.edu/sites/default/files/student_handbook.pdf.

If you require course accommodations because of a documented disability or an emergency medical condition, please email your instructor as soon as possible. We are happy to work with you on any issues you have to ensure that you can participate fully in the class and complete the course requirements. Please do not wait until the assignments are due for a retroactive accommodation, but discuss the situation with your instructor before you experience difficulty.

Course Structure:
9/8-13 Unit 1: Welcome & Introductions
Introducing yourself to other class members and learning to navigate Schoology and this course

9/16-22 Unit 2: Key Concepts: Marking Time, Mitzvah and Halakhah, and Values and Ethics
Background Readings:

Texts:
From Talmud, Midrash, Pirke Avot (Sayings of the Rabbis), Rambam/Maimonides

Educational Applications:
How would you use the primary text material to teach about what “genuine” Jewish ethics are? How would you define “mitzvah” to your class?

9/24-10/2 Unit 3: Birth & Adoption
Background Readings:
Cardin, *Tapestry*, p.196-197
Klein, *Jewish Religious Practice*, pp. 420-421
Adoption: Isaacs, *Rites of Passage*, pp. 124-129

Texts:
Covenant and circumcision: Genesis Ch.15&17; Exod. 4:24-26.
Gillman/Borowitz on covenant
The ceremonies: Isaacs, *Rites of Passage*, pp. 28-32; Brit Banot ceremonies

Educational Applications:
Kadden, *Teaching Mitzvot, Teaching the Life Cycle*, “Activities” sections of the above chapters.

10/4-13 Unit 4: Consecration & Bar/Bat Mitzvah
Background Readings:
Cardin, pp. 206-215
Green, *These Are the Words*, pp. 235-237

Texts:
Pirke Avot 5:23, Yoma 8:4, Midrash on Proverbs, related berakhot
Kadden, *Teaching the Life Cycle*, Ch. 2, “Sources from the Tradition,” p.31

Educational Applications:
10/14-20 Unit 5: Marriage, Conversion, Divorce
Background Readings:
- Isaacs, pp. 80-102, 108-112
- Further Reading:
- Klein pp. 390-405
- 2nd *Jewish Catalog* on Divorce, pp. 108ff, 1st *Jewish Catalog*: Mikvah.

Texts:
- Genesis Ch 25; The Marriage Ceremony
  (Kadden, *Teaching the Life Cycle*, pp. 65ff.)
- Kadden, *Teaching the Life Cycle*, Ch. 3&4, “Sources from the Tradition.”

Educational Application:
- Kadden, *Teaching Mitzvot*, *Teaching the Life Cycle*, “Activities” sections of the above chapters

10/21-27 Unit 6: Death
Background Readings:
- Cardin, Ch. 21
- Klein pp. 279-291 (advanced reading)

Texts:
- Kadden, *Teaching the Life Cycle*, Ch. 6, “Sources from the Tradition.”
- Funeral Service: *El Male*, 23rd Psalm, Kaddish

Educational Application:
- Kadden, *Teaching Mitzvot*, *Teaching the Life Cycle*, “Activities” sections of the above chapters; and p. 131 ff.
  (Death of Moses)
- Ethical Wills

10/28-11/3 Unit 7: K’vod Ha-beriyot/Bein Adam L’atzmo
Background Readings:
- Kadden, *Teaching Mitzvot*, Ch. 37 (Ch. 34 in old version), “Overview”
  (Freeman, *Teaching Jewish Virtues*, Ch. 19, “Overview”)

Texts:
- Voices of Wisdom pp. 38; 210-211.

Educational Application:
- Kadden, *Teaching Mitzvot*, “Activities” section of the above chapter
- Freeman, *Teaching Jewish Virtues*, Ch. 19, “Activities”

11/4-11/10 Unit 8: Tzedakah and Gemilut Hasadim
Background Readings:
- Kadden, *Teaching Mitzvot*, Ch. 21-22 (Ch. 20-21 in old version), “Overview”

Texts:
- From Torah, Talmud, Midrash, Rambam/Maimonides

Educational Application:
- Kadden, *Teaching Mitzvot*, “Activities” section of the above chapters

11/11-17 Unit 9: Bikkur Holim & L’shon HaRa
Background Readings:
- Kadden, *Teaching Mitzvot*, Ch. 26 (Ch. 25 in old version), Ch. 19 (Ch. 18 in old version), “Overview”
- Artson, *It’s a Mitzvah*, Ch. 6 & 13.

Texts:
- Talmud and Shulhan Arukh
  *Derech Eretz*, Ch. 6, p. 81.

Educational Application:
- Kadden, *Teaching Mitzvot*, “Activities” section of the above chapters

11/18-24 Unit 10: Parents and Children: Kibbud Av Va-em
Background Readings:
- Kadden, *Teaching Mitzvot*, Ch. 39 (Ch. 36 in old version), “Overview”
- Artson, Ch.9
11/30-12/8 Unit 11: Tza’ar Ba’alei Hayim; Bal Tashhit
Background Readings:
Kadden, Teaching Mitzvot, Ch. 23 (Ch. 22 in old version), Ch. 33 (Ch. 31 in old version), “Overview”
Artson, Ch. 17 & Ch. 5
Texts:
Deuteronomy 20:19-20 and commentary; Maimonides on Tza’ar Ba’alei Hayim
Educational Application:
Kadden, Teaching Mitzvot, “Activities” section of the above chapters

12/9-15 Unit 11: Kashrut
Background Readings:
Kadden, Teaching Mitzvot, Ch. 14 (Ch. 13 in old version), “Overview”
Dresner, The Jewish Dietary Laws-selections
Texts:
Leviticus Ch. 11; Creation vs. Noah
Educational Application:
Kadden, Teaching Mitzvot, “Activities” section of the above chapter

12/9-15 Unit 12: Tallit and Tefillin
Background Readings:
Kadden, Teaching Mitzvot, Ch. 13 (Ch. 12 in old version), “Overview”
Texts:
Biblical texts on tallit and tefillin; Siddur text on tefillin
Educational Application:
Kadden, Teaching Mitzvot, “Activities” section of the above chapter
Making a tallit - The First Jewish Catalog

12/16-22 Unit 13: Final Projects
Final Projects Due

Final Project Instructions:
Submit an 8-10 page word processed or multimedia project/paper creating a program or unit of Life Cycle or Jewish Values education or instruction in a setting or grade-level of your choice. It can be on a topic not covered in the course, or an original expansion of a topic covered. You should make use of some aspects of the content knowledge and pedagogic applications covered in the course. The project should include some background material demonstrating that you have studied the content area, some primary texts, some personal relation to the topic, and an educational set of experiences for the students. You might think of this as a “Teacher’s or Leader’s Guide” to a unit of study. Be sure your goals and activities are articulately and carefully described.

Once you have finished writing your final project, post a paragraph summary in the final discussion area. Our last lesson will be the posting of and commenting upon individual lesson or units written by class participants. We’ll spend the last week of the course reviewing these units, and posting comments, reactions, and suggestions as colleagues working together to improve our knowledge and practice as Jewish educators.

Other Details on Schoology

Please send in your final version no later than the date listed in the Syllabus (Dec. 22) as email attachment. Grades and responses to your project will be by email. Worth 30% of course grade.

Criteria
• Paper is well written and uses proper spelling, grammar and footnotes (if used).
• Clear target audience and developmentally appropriate
• Clearly articulated goals and specific Instructional Objectives (Students will be able to...)
• Use of core life cycle or Jewish values concepts
• Demonstrates an understanding of the background and history of the life cycle rituals or Jewish values being taught
• Project/Unit is cohesive and logically developed
• Includes a variety of appropriate instructional strategies for the content topic
• Evidences active student learning
• Includes some assessment plan or summative activity