In this course, we still study selections from the fifth מסכת קקבדות פרק, dealing with household relations and obligations of husbands to wives, and wives to husbands. In particular, we will focus on three sets of questions:

1) What are the specific ways in which these passages assume heteronormative and generally patriarchal marital relations?
2) What would it look like to rewrite these passages removing those heteronormative assumptions? Is such a reading even possible?
3) How, if at all, can such a reading of these texts challenge our own assumptions (or areas to which we have given insufficient thought) in productive ways?

Objectives (in roughly chronological order)

1) To increase facility in reading the text of the gemara
2) To increase facility in reading the commentary of Rashi and using it as a tool in understanding the gemara
3) To further ability in understanding the fundamental concerns and values behind statements and debates in the gemara and apply those values and concerns sensibly
4) To increase knowledge of Rabbinic statements about gender, family relations, and division of domestic labor
5) Time permitting, to begin study of selected rishonim

Required Texts

1) Massekhet Ketubot. You must own a copy of the “Vilna Shas” printing of מסכת קקבדות. It is not sufficient to work off of photocopies, downloads from computer programs, websites, or copies of individual פרקים. In addition, though it is not required, you are strongly encouraged to own a relatively recent copy of the tractate, for two reasons: a) editions printed in roughly the last 20 years or so will have bold-faced דורות פמיהים in the פרקים, which will make you a much happier student. b) Education scholarship has shown how much students’ experience of Talmud is influenced by the material nature of learning; old copies of Talmud, with dry, thin, and/or yellowed pages, affect the way many people think about the content of our study in negative ways. It’s thus worth the extra money to buy yourself a copy of the ממסכת that you will enjoy touching and looking at.
2) Frank, Practical Talmud Dictionary. I can think of nothing that will have a more beneficial effect on your learning than owning your own copy of this invaluable resource.
3) Recommended: Jastrow, *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*.

**Digital devices in class**

All digital devices must be set to airplane mode in class. In addition, **telephones must be turned off and stowed safely underneath your seat**; a posture of hands held underneath the table with face turned downwards is disrespectful to your classmates and to me, and I will ask individuals in such a physical position to put their phones away. Consistent problems with this policy will affect your participation component of the grade.

Additionally, I **strongly** encourage students not to make use of any laptops, iPads, or other such devices during class. There are significant costs to abstaining from such use—for me as well as for you—but I believe that the benefits outweigh the costs. Although distractions from the internet will not be a problem (because you’re in airplane mode), screens affect the quality of conversation in a classroom, even if everyone using them is using them for purposes directly related to class. For more on this, see [http://chronicle.com/blogs/linguafranca/2014/08/25/why-im-asking-you-not-to-use-laptops/](http://chronicle.com/blogs/linguafranca/2014/08/25/why-im-asking-you-not-to-use-laptops/).

**Course Requirements**

1) **Class participation/preparation (20%)**. Attendance is required; if you know that you must miss a class, please notify me in advance. **When you miss class, you are expected to find out what you missed from your hevruta and/or me and to submit, within a week of the missed class, one page (or more, if you choose) summarizing your understanding of what was discussed that day.** Also, you will be regularly called on, and your ability to read and explain the text will be the primary component of this grade. Please be aware that many people can read fluently without understanding what they are reading, while others may stutter and sound unprepared despite complete comprehension. You will be assessed based on your comprehension and ability to explain, not your charismatic (or uncharismatic) reading style. You will also receive a very brief assessment from me during the week of 16 November. These are non-binding, but rather are intended to give anyone who is underperforming an early warning. **Please also feel free to contact me at any time during the semester if you are concerned that your performance in class is unrepresentative of your work and/or understanding of the material.**

2) **Outlines and other daily assignments (20%).** For each sugya, you will prepare, in English or in Hebrew, an outline to be turned in, in hard copy. **These will sometimes be due when you come to class (i.e. before having studied the sugya together in class), and sometimes will be due following class. The assignment sheet for each sugya will make clear which it is.** The outline should paraphrase each step of the sugya and describe what function that step plays in the larger structure (e.g. attack, resolution, question, etc.). There will also be other short assignments over the course of the semester as well, which will be explained in class. You should expect to have a short assignment due each class.

3) **Takehome midterm review (20%).** Our midterm exam will be a take-home examination. It will be handed out following class on Wednesday 4 November, and due back in hard copy by the following Wednesday 11 November at the start of the class. Though this may change, it will likely consist of two sections: a) translations and outlines of previously
studied sugyot; and b) a section in which you will be asked to parse a previously unseen sugya.

4) Mid-semester writing piece (20%). A 5-7 page essay responding to a prompt that will require synthesis of two or more sugyot previously studied. The prompts will be provided on Wednesday 18 November, and the essay will be due the following Wednesday 25 November (the day before Thanksgiving).

5) End of semester oral evaluation (20%). Our final exam will be a one-one-one oral examination with me. We will study one previously seen sugya and you will be asked to speak intelligently about some of the questions we have discussed about household relations, drawing evidence from both the texts themselves and your own experience. You will also be asked to read one previously unseen sugya. These will take place during the last week of the semester, Wednesday 16 December-Tuesday 22 December.