How to Lead Shabbat Services
Hazzan Neil Schwartz
CANTR 514
Spring 2013 Semester

Course Description:
This course provides an introduction to the chanting of Jewish liturgy using Nusach HaT'fillah. Topics will include: basic Hebrew grammar needed for accurate pronunciation and parsing of phrases, Ashkenazic motifs for chanting Nusach HaT'fillah, and pedagogy.

Course Prerequisites:
1. Ability to read Hebrew fluently
2. Ability to translate with a dictionary
3. A sense of musical pitch

Learning Objectives:
At the end of this course, students should be able to chant various passages from the Siddur with accuracy and fluency. Students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the structure of Jewish liturgy, familiarity with basic Hebrew grammar which underlies liturgical chant, and basic musical modes of Nusach HaT'fillah.

Course Methodology:
This course will be taught with a "problem-solving" approach to Nusach HaT'fillah. Example Siddur texts will be studied to determine the grammar and music issues which arise as Nusach HaT'fillah is chanted. Background material will be provided as PDF files and MP3 files to supplement the required text.

Participation:
Class participation is urged using the tools of online communication which are built into the "Schoology" online interface. Assignments will include chanting of Siddur texts in the various musical modes as each topic of Nusach HaT'fillah is explored, and discussion of background material in the online environment.
Course Readings

Required Texts:
Siddur Sim Shalom (complete) ed. Rabbi Jules Harlow
1985, Rabbinical Assembly, 880 pp.
ISBN 0-916219-01-1 (hardcover)

Recommended Texts:
The Complete Metsudah Siddur ed. Rabbi Avrohom Davis
1990, Metsudah Publications
ASIN B000K00PXC (hardcover)

Siddur Mishkan T'filah (complete) ed. Rabbi Elyse Frishman
2007, Central Conf. of American Rabbis
ISBN 0-88123-114-2 (hardcover)

Required Software:
Tefillah Trainer (tm) (Windows or Mac) made by Kinnor Software - www.Kinnor.com
(large student discount available)

Recommended Hardware:
Headset with an attached microphone will help with clarity of communication.

Assessments:
Short quizzes will be given periodically throughout this course to assess progress. A final exam will be given in both oral and written format during the last week to assess accuracy of Hebrew pronunciation, fluency of Siddur chant, and mastery of background material. The final grade will be based on class participation 20%, periodic quizzes 30%, and oral / written final exams 50%.

Honesty & Integrity:
This course is primarily "skill-based" in nature, so academic papers are not required. Written exams are subject to the standard expectations of academic honesty and integrity.
Course Schedule & Topics

Unit 1: Jan. 28 - Feb. 5  Why chant prayers, Jewish migrations; structure of liturgy, "problem" issues.

Unit 2: Feb. 6 - Feb. 12  Preliminary Hebrew grammar concepts; development of Jewish liturgy.

Unit 3: Feb. 13 - Feb. 19  Introduction to Nusach musical prayer-modes; the HaShem Malach mode.

Unit 4: Feb. 20 - Feb. 26  "Simanei Nusach" graphic symbols; the Magein Avot mode of Arvit L'Shabbat.

Unit 5: Feb. 27 - Mar. 5  Accents, syllables, prefixes / suffixes, prepositions / conjunctions, pronunciation.

Unit 6: Mar. 6 - Mar. 12  "Yishtabach" motifs of Shacharit L'Shabbat; congregational melodies.

Unit 7: Mar. 13 - Mar. 18  The "High" Shabbat Ahavah Rabbah mode; vocabulary of Jewish liturgy.

Unit 8: Mar. 19 - Mar. 25  Torah and Haftarah Cantillation; Shabbat Mincha and Motza-ei Shabbat motifs.

Unit 9: Apr. 3 - Apr. 9  Pedagogy resources and teaching methods; review previous grammar.

Unit 10: Apr. 10 - Apr. 16  Bibliography of printed, recorded, software and Internet resources; Hallel.

Unit 11: Apr. 17 - Apr. 23  Resources for Gabbai roles; choreography within Shabbat services.

Unit 12: Apr. 24 - Apr. 30  Review of "Simanei Nusach" graphic symbols; evaluation of their effectiveness for teaching.

Unit 13: May 1 - May 7  Review pronunciation, grammar; Nusach HaT'fillah modes and motifs; history.

Unit 14: May 8 - May 14  Review and questions about previous 12 Units.

Unit 15: May 17 - May 24  Written and Oral tests of knowledge and skills.