HEBREW COLLEGE  
Spring, 2013  
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Cantillation 1: Theory and Practice of Torah Cantillation CANTR529

Cantillation 1 CANTR 529 3 credits
Students analyze the punctuation system underlying the chanting of the Hebrew Bible. Students are instructed in the syntactic parsing and correct contemporary pronunciation of biblical Hebrew, and learn a traditional Ashkenazic mode for the public cantillation of the Pentateuch. Prerequisite: Hebrew 6. While this course is primarily for cantorial students, others are welcome, provided they have an adequate sense of musical pitch and the ability to read and translate biblical Hebrew.

Topics to be covered include: history of cantillation, halakhot and minhagim, syntactic analysis of biblical Hebrew, expert-level pronunciation of biblical Hebrew, expert-level performance of the standard and exceptional melodies for Ashkenazic Torah cantillation, pedagogy of cantillation.

The class will meet Tuesdays 11:15–1:15. Our first class is January 29 and our last class is May 21.

Required Textbook:

Students should bring a Koren edition of the Torah (the Shabbat Humash is recommended) to each class. Students should also bring the textbook to class each week (even though it's so heavy).

Also Recommended:
• I also highly recommend the newest and largest edition of the "Simanim" Tikkun.
• You can buy textbooks at a good price through an online bookseller, such as amazon.com.

Grade will be based on:
• Class participation, weekly recitals and assignments
• A written final exam.
• Oral final exams:
  • Each student will chant (with 10 minutes preparation) several verses of Torah.
Each student will chant (with one week preparation) verses demonstrating mastery of the various manifestations of the “Shirat Ha-yam” melody, as well as the procedures for chanting on a fast day, Simhat Torah, the Shabbat before Tish’a Be’av, the ending of an aliya, and concluding each of the five “books” of the Torah.

Each student will prepare to read one complete aliya of a Torah portion from the unpunctuated column of a tikkun.

More material will be posted on the course (Schoology) website.