



## Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies

OF AMERICAN JEWISH UNIVERSITY

### Hebrew at Ziegler:

The foundation of Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies curriculum is geared toward mastering classical texts written in both biblical Hebrew and “Leshon Hazal,” also known as rabbinic Hebrew. The first two years of the program are dedicated to giving students sufficient background and competency in classical biblical and rabbinic texts, engaging with them as the primary models for reading and comprehension. By doing so, students will progress more rapidly in both the understanding of Hebrew grammar and its development, will dramatically expand their Hebrew vocabulary, and will build a solid foundation for Hebrew learning that will accompany them for the duration of their studies and into their rabbinic work.

### Prerequisite for Beginning Hebrew at Ziegler:

Students entering the Ziegler School should have the ability to read (without comprehension) a vocalized biblical Hebrew text with a minimum of difficulty. In addition, all entering students must have mastered the material contained in the following chapters of **Uveeler, Luba and Norman M. Bronzick, *Ha-Yesod*, Feldheim Publishers, 1998**. Please note that the Ziegler School Hebrew Entrance Exam will be based entirely on the material covered in the chapters of *Ha-Yesod* outlined below.

Introduction pp. vii-xix

Chapters 1, 2, 4-15, 16 (Omit Sections I and II), 17 (Omit Section I-III), 18, 19 (Omit Sections II-V), 20, 21 (Omit Sections I and II), 22

Chapters 30, 31, 32 (Omit Section III), 34 (Omit Sections II and III), 35-36, 37, 38, 39 (Omit Sections II and III), 40-42

Chapters 46 (Omit Section III), 48 (Omit Sections II and III), 51 (Omit Section V), 52, 53, 58, 64-66, 69 (Omit Sections II and III), 70 (Omit Section II).

While this is a prerequisite for entering Ziegler School text classes, the key to learning Jewish texts is to be able to decode the Hebrew. The more Hebrew you have, the more prepared you will be for the work of rabbinical school. For continued learning beyond the prerequisite material listed above, you may also consult the following resources:

- Uveeler, Luba and Norman M. Bronzick, *Ha-Yesod: remaining chapters*
- Chayat, Shlomit, *Hebrew from Scratch (ההתחלה מן עברית)* volumes I and II

- Freedman Cohen, Gila and Carmia Shoval, *Easing Into Modern Hebrew Grammar*
- Hebrew grammar and vocabulary flashcards: <https://www.studystack.com/hebrew>.

For additional suggestions on ways to improve Hebrew, please contact the Ziegler School admissions coordinator.

## Learning Outcomes:

### **First Semester:**

Students will learn to recognize and analyze the regular verbal forms used in rabbinic Hebrew as well as some of the exceptional verbal forms and will improve their pronunciation of rabbinic texts while working toward simple and intermediate comprehension. They will achieve a basic understanding of how grammatical forms in Hebrew evolved historically. Students will also learn the skill of classical text preparation and use of dictionaries oriented to rabbinic Hebrew, becoming familiar with the rabbinic Hebrew vocabulary.

### **Second Semester:**

Students will continue to analyze regular and exceptional verbal forms used in classical Hebrew and in addition, will gain exposure to the differences between the biblical and rabbinic dialects of classical Hebrew. Students will continue to improve their mechanical reading of Hebrew texts, including texts without vowels, and will read intermediate level biblical and rabbinic texts with comprehension. They will also continue to expand their vocabulary as it relates to the dialects of biblical and rabbinic Hebrew.

### **Third semester:**

Students will gain greater insight into the morphological forms of biblical Hebrew while gaining an understanding of the syntax (sentence structure) of these texts. Students will begin to acquire a deeper understanding of the morphology and vocabulary of Aramaic as it appears in the Babylonian Talmud. Students will also expand their familiarity with various textual genres including more advanced biblical texts such as poetry, prophetic literature, and the psalms included in the liturgy.

### **Fourth semester:**

Students will continue to acquire a deeper understanding of the syntax of biblical Hebrew, acquiring greater proficiency in the reading of more advanced biblical texts including poetry, prophetic literature, and the psalms included in the liturgy.

## REQUIRED TOPICS FOR HEBREW ENTRANCE EXAM ZIEGLER SCHOOL OF RABBINIC STUDIES

**Note:** the following is a list of the grammatical topics required to meet the Hebrew entrance requirements for the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies. The chapters indicated below are taken from Uveeler, Luba and Bronznick, Norman M. Ha-Yesod: Fundamentals of Hebrew. The required grammar topics are listed below alongside the required chapters. Students are also expected to master the vocabulary words listed at the beginning of each chapter. On the exam, students will be asked to translate sentences from Hebrew into English, but NOT from English into Hebrew. Students will also be asked to conjugate verbs in the various forms including the vowels. In addition to the written entrance exam, students will be examined orally. Students are not required to converse in Hebrew. However, they will be asked, orally, to demonstrate their ability to read vocalized Hebrew (i.e., Hebrew with vowels) and to conjugate verbs correctly. Students must also demonstrate the ability to write Hebrew using the cursive alphabet letters.

**Introduction pp. vii-xix:** Consonants, Vowels (Names of Vowels, Identify Short and Long), Types of Sheva, Types of Dagesh, Read Hebrew with Vowels.

**Chapters 1-22:** Gender, Number, Definite Article, פֶּעַל שְׁלֵמִים, Interrogatives, Prepositions, Adjectives (Agreement with Nouns), Demonstratives, Direct Object, Adjectives as Adverbs, Negation, Stative Verbs, The Dual, The Conjunctive וְ.

**Chapters 30-32:** Possessive Endings for Nouns and Prepositions (Singular), פֶּעַל שְׁלֵמִים (Infinitive, Present, Past),

**Chapters 35-36:** פֶּעַל שְׁלֵמִים (Future), סְמִיכוֹת, Possessive Endings for Nouns and Prepositions (Plural)

**Chapters 37-42:** Cardinal Numbers, Ordinal Numbers, Possessive Endings

**Chapters 46, 48, 51-53, 58:** הַפְּעִיל, Present Passive Participle, הַתְּפַעַל שְׁלֵמִים, הַתְּפַעַל שְׁלֵמִים, שְׁלֵמִים

**Chapters 64-66, 69-70:** The Gender of Nouns, Segolate Nouns (Singular and Plural Forms), הַפְּעַל שְׁלֵמִים, הַפְּעַל שְׁלֵמִים