

## Chapter 6. Faculty (*Standard 10*)

### Overview of Charge

The working group charged with Standard 10 conducted its inquiry by consulting relevant documents within the Documents Inventory compiled by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA), relevant documents compiled for the working group by the OIRA, written materials describing existing programs, documents generated by the members of the working group or by others at the working group's request, and personal interviews conducted or email inquiries made by the members and/or chair of the working group. In considering the HUC-JIR faculty, three policy documents stand out as being of singular importance: The Faculty Handbook (with updates and revisions as of 1/1/2011) including two of its Appendices: Policies and Procedures Governing Faculty Appointments, Promotion and Tenure for All Schools and Campuses of HUC-JIR (the "Policies and Procedures," revised 7/1/2007) and the Regulations of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (the "Regulations," revised 06/2012). In preparing this report, the working group also consulted the recently circulated (2/2012) Academic Vision and Faculty Plan prepared by the VPAA.

### Standard 10. Faculty

#### Discussion of Research Questions and Compliance

The working group reformulated the four research questions of its charge as stated in the Self-Study Design to fit better with the theme of integrating the four campuses and dealing with the financial impact of the Great Recession.

##### *Research Question 10.1*

*What is the faculty's role in governance and structures through which the faculty acts?*

HUC-JIR's Regulations provide for the joint responsibility of the faculty and VPAA in "all academic areas including academic standards, curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process." The BoG retains "final authority in all matters affecting the College-Institute." As a national faculty with members located on four local campuses, the faculty fulfills the role set out in the Regulations through both national and local bodies. The two national bodies through which the faculty exercises its role are the AAC and the Faculty Council (FC; see the Faculty Handbook). Both Councils have undergone changes in the last five years. Beginning in the mid-1990's the AAC provided the Provost (subsequently VPAA) with a forum consisting of faculty and administrators from all campuses. This forum would discuss policy and share information and problems. Over time, the AAC became quite large, comprising faculty, deans, program directors, and directors of other functions of HUC-JIR, notably the registrar, Director of Libraries, and Director of the American Jewish Archives, for a total of about twenty participants. This large size ensured that the AAC was a representative body and changed its functional emphasis from deliberation to policy ratification. This change enabled a decline in the AAC's meeting frequency and its reconstitution as an as-needed forum to discuss and decide on institution-wide academic policies.

The other major national faculty forum is the FC. The Faculty Handbook had provided for a FC as a representative, national faculty body to discuss institution-wide faculty concerns. Nevertheless, that body did not take a prominent role in academic governance until 2009. In the

midst of the institutional challenges of 2009, the national administration appointed a committee of faculty members chaired by the then-incoming VPAA to advise the administration on the pending challenges. These faculty members strongly advocated that national faculty leadership be faculty-elected, rather than appointed. As a result, the faculty as a whole reconstituted the FC as an elected, representative body, empowered by the faculty to represent its interests to the administration and BoG. The FC consists of twelve elected faculty members, three from each campus. Several years ago, the BoG (September, 2009) put into effect a revision of the Regulations that provided for seating a faculty representative as a voting member of the Board. This representative is approved by the FC and the VPAA.

The FC sees its role as that indicated in the Faculty Handbook: it “unifies, represents, and acts on behalf of the entire Faculty.” The FC is the voice of the tenured and tenure-track faculty, although it also provides a forum for part-time, adjunct, and emeritus faculty. The FC plays an important role as an intermediary between HUC-JIR’s national administration and the faculty, and is a critical partner with the VPAA. The FC also discusses other issues of faculty concern with the national administration, notably matters relating to conditions of employment, salaries and benefits, and issues that impact on the smooth functioning of HUC-JIR. When the FC takes up issues that relate to employment, salaries, and benefits in general, it provides a voice for non-instructional staff as well.

As noted above, the BoG has “final authority” in all matters that affect HUC-JIR. The BoG exercises its oversight of academic and faculty affairs through its Academic and Faculty Affairs Committee. The faculty governor sits on this committee, which thus benefits from the direct participation and perspective of a faculty member. While each local campus also has a Board of Overseers, only the NY Board of Overseers has an Academic Affairs Committee. The NY Overseers who sit on the Academic Affairs Committee are principally interested in staying informed about the academic life of the NY campus so that they can be ambassadors for HUC-JIR to others outside the institution and so that they can contribute to the life of the campus in well-informed and truly meaningful ways. NY faculty and students frequently make presentations to this committee.

While HUC-JIR is moving toward greater integration of its four campuses, there remains much work that each local campus can only do on its own. Consequently, each campus faculty has its own organizational structure. Each local North American faculty has an elected faculty chair (the JR faculty does not, on account of its small size). Each faculty chair sits on the FC and plays an important role in mediating between each local faculty and administration, and in communicating with other campuses. Each local faculty has also organized itself into committees. Committee service is one of HUC-JIR’s expectations of faculty as outlined in the Faculty Handbook. Each local campus’s committee structure is similar yet distinct; the distinctions reflect each local faculty’s unique culture and distinctive approach to fulfilling its mission. In what follows, only committees that deal with issues of particular faculty concern will be mentioned.

All three North American campuses have a Committee on Faculty (whatever its precise name), which oversees hiring, tenure, and promotion in accordance with the Policies and Procedures in the Faculty Handbook. Due to the small number of tenured/tenure-track faculty in JR, there is no permanent, standing Committee on Faculty. The JR dean or a program director convenes such a committee when needed and draws on stateside faculty in appropriate fields. In addition to the Committee on Faculty, the CN faculty organized Committees on Faculty Welfare and the Executive Committee of the Graduate School. They have also recently created an Executive Committee of the Rabbinical School which now subsumes the functions of the former standing committees on Academic Affairs, Religious Affairs, and Extracurricular Activities. It should be

noted that most of the CN faculty is tenured/tenure-track, there are very few adjuncts, and all the faculty of the Graduate School are also faculty in the Rabbinical School.

NY and LA use a larger number of adjunct faculty. They also have a larger number of programs with faculty having fewer shared functions. NY has a Core Curriculum Committee (the Rabbinical School and DFSSM each has its own) and a Library Committee. In LA, the faculty of each program meets regularly to discuss curricular issues, and there is a Curriculum Committee that meets to discuss various curricular and policy issues, notably the introduction of new courses and programs. In both NY and LA, there is regular interaction and consultation among the faculty of all the programs, although there are local differences in how this is done. In NY, the faculty of each program assembles for monthly meetings of the faculty of the Rabbinical School. In LA, this interaction and consultation is accomplished through the overarching Executive Committee on Academic and Student Affairs (ECASA), which oversees academic and student affairs on the whole campus. The members of ECASA are the dean, associate dean, the faculty chair, and the directors of the five programs on the LA campus. The associate dean serves as ECASA's current chair. ECASA is an interesting and unique committee that takes on campus-wide issues and serves as a forum in which issues of campus programming and culture can be discussed in addition to academic matters.

HUC-JIR's articulation of and adherence to its vision of the faculty role in governance in its Regulations, the Faculty Handbook, and the Policies and Procedures demonstrate fulfillment of S10\_06.

### *Research Question 10.2*

*How does the composition of the faculty differ across campuses in the balance of tenure/tenure-track, full-time, and part-time adjunct faculty?*

The VPAA has recently undertaken a careful study of the composition of the HUC-JIR faculty. As a result of this study, he has categorized the people who carry out the instructional task at HUC-JIR as follows: tenured/tenure-track faculty, faculty/administrators, retiring and retired faculty, blended-track faculty, full-time adjunct instructors, full-time administrators who also teach, visiting and special faculty. As he points out, the core of the faculty is the tenured/tenure-track faculty, whose role is governed by the Faculty Handbook. Of the tenured/tenure-track faculty, a number serve as faculty/administrators, notably the president, one vice president, two deans, the director of the American Jewish Archives, the director of the School of Graduate Studies in CN, the director of the Rhea Hirsch School of Jewish Education, the director of the Louchheim School of Judaic Studies, and the director of the Rabbinical School in LA. There is a "blended track," discussed in the Faculty Handbook, which was created as a way to give status to administrators who also have academic credentials. Currently, four faculty members are on the blended track, and two others are retired. There are over ten full-time adjunct instructors, five of whom have or are working on PhD's. There are over twenty-four full-time administrators who teach; seven of whom have or are working on PhD's. There is a small number of visiting and special faculty, a few of whom are funded through the Jim Joseph Foundation Education Initiative. Finally, there are over eighty adjunct faculty members throughout HUC-JIR; some are full-time, and others are part-time.

### *Tenured or Tenure-track Faculty*

The faculty résumés show highly distinguished academic qualifications mainly from among the most acclaimed doctoral institutions in the world, fulfilling S10\_01. The VPAA has found that the number of tenured/tenure-track faculty reached a high of about sixty in 2008-09. Fifteen new faculty members were hired between 1996 and 2008, only five of whom were one-for-one

replacements of retirees, deaths, or other separations. One reason for these hires was the need and desire to replenish and rejuvenate the faculty. Another relevant factor was the transformation of the LA Rabbinical School into an ordaining program; this necessitated a larger faculty both in order to teach the extra curriculum for years 4 and 5 of the program as well as to continue to provide instruction to USC via the Louchheim School. At present, due in part to HUC-JIR's financial challenges, the size of the tenured/tenure-track faculty is being allowed to decrease through attrition, with the goal of settling on a tenured/tenure-track faculty size of forty-seven. The VPAA is working on a Faculty Plan to reach the forty-seven number without reducing the faculty's effectiveness, and has suggested that there be fourteen tenured/tenure-track faculty members on each North American campus and five in Jerusalem. This plan is currently under discussion within the FC and among the local faculties.

Notwithstanding the financial pressures on the institution that have led to the drive to reduce the size of the tenured/tenure-track faculty, HUC-JIR has also recognized the need to continue to renew the faculty (see the recent discussion by the Academic and Faculty Affairs Committee of the Board). Since 2006, six well-qualified scholars (S10\_01) have been added to the tenure-track<sup>13</sup> (only one of whom was a net addition) and three highly qualified professionals have been added as Faculty/Administration<sup>14</sup> (all of whom were one-for-one replacements). A current search for a tenure-track faculty member replacement is underway in Cincinnati. A three-year contract replacement appointment was made in Los Angeles in 2011<sup>15</sup> and a search for another is currently underway in Cincinnati.

### *Adjunct Faculty*

For this report, the term “adjunct faculty” will refer to all those engaged in instructional tasks at HUC-JIR who are not tenured or tenure-track and are not employed full-time as administrators who also teach. Whether full- or part-time, adjunct faculty are critical to the instructional task, providing much-needed practical expertise in professional skills, adding additional sections of Hebrew language instruction, and benefiting the students with the perspective of expert pulpit practitioners—a perspective that many tenured or tenure-track faculty cannot provide. Adjunct faculty even make it possible for certain vital HUC-JIR programs to exist. For example, the expertise of more than twenty part-time faculty who work outside HUC-JIR as cantors or teachers of musicianship and music theory provides vital support to the two tenured faculty members of the DFSSM. The adjuncts teach repertoire workshops, conducting, guitar, and choir. They also act as voice coaches, arrangers, and accompanists for student performances. The Director of the DFSSM points out that “This school could not function without the many non-tenured, adjunct faculty.... This gives the school a vitality and variety not possible if we had to rely solely on full-time tenured faculty.... They do it for the love of the DFSSM.” Given the breadth of music a cantor must master, the DFSSM requires a faculty that can provide the students with a wide variety of repertoire and musical styles.

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<sup>13</sup>Joshua Garroway (PhD, Yale University; early Christianity and Second Commonwealth—LA 2008)

Leah Hochman (PhD, Boston University; Jewish thought—LA 2008)

David Levine (PhD, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Talmud—JR 2006)

Dalia Marx (PhD, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Jewish liturgy—JR 2008)

Tali Zekowicz (PhD, New York University; Jewish education—LA 2006)

Lynn Kaye (PhD, New York University; Rabbinic Literature—LA 2012)

<sup>14</sup>Rabbi Julie Schwartz, Director of Pastoral Care and Clinical Pastoral Education (MAHL and Rabbinical Ordination, HUC-JIR and Certified CPE Educator—CN 2011)

Evie Rotstein, Director of the New York School of Education (EdD, Jewish Theological Seminary of America—NY 2012)

David Mendelsson, Director of the Year-in-Israel Program (PhD, Hebrew University of Jerusalem—JR 2012)

<sup>15</sup>Kristine Garroway (PhD, HUC-JIR—Bible and Ancient Near East—LA 2011)

Similarly, adjunct faculty are critical to the SJNM in LA. The director of the SJNM reports that they comprise most of its faculty for two principal reasons: (1) the SJNM needs to provide its students with expert training in certain areas of nonprofit management that the tenured or tenure-track LA faculty cannot provide; and (2) the SJNM summer session is not included within the instructional deployment of the tenured or tenure-track faculty, most of whom spend the summer in research and writing. Aside from the LA faculty members who are specifically designated as SJNM faculty, other LA faculty members who teach in the SJNM during the summer and academic year are hired with adjunct contracts at adjunct salaries, as they typically fulfill their teaching duties during the academic year through teaching in other programs. Adjunct faculty are also important to the Doctor of Ministry and Executive MA in Jewish Education programs.

The Faculty Handbook only governs tenured and tenure-track faculty; consequently, procedures for hiring adjunct instructors and evaluating their performance are in the hands of program directors and deans. As an example, the director of the DFSSM reports that when the need arises to fill such a position, he solicits names from “full-time and experienced people,” after which he vets these recommendations and then pursues an appropriate candidate. The former director of the NYSOE was careful to stress the quality of the faculty she has assembled, who are not tenured or tenure-track. She adds that all such faculty have EdD or PhD degrees. Moreover, all NYSOE and DFSSM faculty, regardless of status, participate equally in faculty meetings, are evaluated similarly, engage in professional development activities, and are expected to be current in their fields. The former director of the NYSOE made it clear that neither she nor the tenured or tenure-track SOE faculty, nor the students, sees a distinction between the instructors with different sorts of faculty status. This is reported to be true of the DFSSM as well. The Jerusalem dean has proposed a promotion system for “adjuncts,” who may be either full-time or half-time teachers. In this system adjunct faculty would be assessed on the basis of teaching (student evaluations and director’s evaluation), academic work, curricular innovation, involvement in HUC-JIR life, and contribution to Israeli society and the Progressive Movement. Given the restriction of the Faculty Handbook to tenured or tenure-track faculty, there would be value in conducting a systematic analysis of adjunct faculty across the institution that would consider the Jerusalem dean’s suggestions and other approaches to adjunct policies.

It should also be noted that, on all campuses, the students evaluate adjunct faculty at semesters’ ends, just as they do tenured/tenure-track faculty. The students’ perceptions of these faculty members’ work is thus regularly brought to the attention of program directors and deans. The director of the DFSSM points out that he assesses the effectiveness of adjunct faculty not only through student evaluations, but also through students’ performances in their “practica” and through exit interviews with graduating seniors (see Chapter 2 for a list of links). Yet it does appear that the experiences of adjunct faculty vary very much by program. One adjunct faculty member on a North American campus points out that in her case, although she regularly sees the students’ evaluations of her courses, no director or dean ever evaluates or assesses her work. It seems that HUC-JIR would benefit overall from implementing an institution-wide written policy governing these faculty members, with due allowance for flexibility in response to local conditions.

HUC-JIR’s care to appoint, promote, and tenure well-qualified tenured/tenure-track faculty, and its concern for the hiring and retention of only well-qualified adjunct faculty, demonstrate its adherence to S10\_01, S10\_07, and S10\_08.

### *Research Question 10.3*

*How are ambiguities in the policies for appointment, reappointment, and promotion of tenured/tenure-track faculty dealt with across the four campuses?*

Appointment, reappointment, and promotion of tenured/tenure-track faculty (whose appointments are made by the BoG) are managed on each North American campus by a standing Committee on Faculty that operates in accordance with the Policies and Procedures. (As noted above, the JR campus does not have a standing Committee on Faculty.) All chairs of the local Committees reported to the working group their diligent adherence to the Policies and Procedures; one current chair even referring to it as a “Bible.”

Common reliance on the Policies and Procedures by distinct local campuses with distinct local cultures has resulted in several noticeable differences in how each applies them. These differences may heuristically be categorized as follows: (1) differences due in part to unforeseen consequences of the Policies and Procedures themselves, (2) differences due in part to differences in campus culture, and (3) differences due in part to reasonable differences of interpretation among the campuses of broad language in the Policies and Procedures.

#### *Unforeseen Consequences of the Policies and Procedures*

Two chairs of Committees on Faculty pointed out the same unforeseen consequence. The Policies and Procedures require that only full professors participate in deliberations of the Committee on Faculty. This poses a problem for the two campuses on which at present there are few faculty members at this level. On both campuses, the chairs have consulted with the VPAA and local deans in order to arrive at a solution to the difficulty. In doing so, the goal has been consistent with maintaining the five-person local committee, with all members being at or above the level of the person being reviewed.

#### *Differences Possibly Attributable to Differences in Campus Culture*

As one current chair of a campus Committee on Faculty has accurately noted, “While we all operate in accordance with the same Policies and Procedures document, each campus’s committee has its own ways, customs, and traditions of interpreting that document.” Indeed, each HUC-JIR campus has its own “ways, customs, and traditions,” which neither the local campuses nor the national administration find it appropriate to efface. Local differences in the interpretation of the Policies and Procedures are not problematic in and of themselves, although more frequent consultation among Committee on Faculty chairs might keep each campus better informed about how and why the others interpret the Policies and Procedures as they do. Only two chairs of the Committees on Faculty—one current and one past—told the working group that they had spoken to each other about their committees’ work.

Differences in local campus cultures may account—at least in part—for different implementations of the Policies and Procedures’ requirement that the pedagogy of a candidate for reappointment, promotion, or tenure be evaluated. The Policies and Procedures mandate that all candidates submit a self-study essay that consists in part of (1) their goals in teaching and the nature and structure of the courses taught, and (2) a description of their work in the development of new courses, together with syllabi of all courses taught during the previous four semesters (as well as any courses currently being taught that differ from those).

Additionally, CN and NY rely on tenured faculty’s observations of the candidate’s teaching and student evaluations. All campuses send out questionnaires to recent alumni who took courses with the candidate and require the candidate to submit either a teaching portfolio or syllabi. LA

has required a teaching portfolio since the 1980's. This portfolio is a sort of pedagogical self-study, calling on the candidate to give special attention to "the most important item in the portfolio... a cover memo that reflects on your strengths and challenges as a teacher, and discusses the ways in which you have worked to improve your teaching since you last came up for review."

### *Differences in Interpretation of the Policies and Procedures*

Some intentionally underdetermined language in the Policies and Procedures has understandably led to local differences in interpretation. Section 9 ("Granting of Tenure") is silent on the subject of whether the candidate must have published or be close to publishing a book in order to receive tenure. Yet Section 10.3.1 ("Promotion to the Rank of Full Professor") reads: "Since a book-length monograph is usually expected from a candidate for Tenure, for promotion to... Full Professor, a candidate is expected to have completed... a substantial portion of a manuscript... of a second book." Sections 9 and 10 together raise the question of the equivalency of other publications to a book. This question sometimes results in differing local interpretations, which could be clarified by mentioning the equivalency issue in the Policies and Procedures without undermining the flexibility inherent in the underdetermined language of Section 9.

Recently, in the course of fulfilling its own role in the decision to reappoint, promote, or award tenure, the Academic and Faculty Affairs Committee of the BoG identified another interpretive issue in the Policies and Procedures (see also above, Chapter 2). The Policies and Procedures refer throughout to "scholarship," "publication," "work in progress," etc., but are silent as to whether co-authored publications, or edited and co-edited volumes "count" as "scholarship" and "publication" for reappointment, promotion, and tenure. Such collaborative work is particularly common in the social sciences and education. The BoG committee appropriately did not decide the issue, but directed the VPAA to instruct the faculty to review the Policies and Procedures. The FC is currently taking up this issue.

A discussion of differences in interpretation of the Policies and Procedures goes hand in hand with a discussion of the role of the Committees on Faculty in mentoring and guiding junior faculty. The working group found that while junior faculty tend to want specific guidance on the amount and types of publication and service required for reappointment, promotion, and tenure, providing overly specific advice would violate the flexibility goals of the process. One chair stressed that his committee strives to avoid dictating too precisely to junior faculty what they must or should do in order to be eligible for promotion or tenure, as long as what they are doing is "academic." While it is important to preserve flexibility, junior faculty would be served by the development of a more comprehensive mentoring process.

In sum, while there are good and reasonable bases for differences of interpretation of aspects of the Policies and Procedures, the faculty should systematically review these differences and reconsider how much variation among the campuses it feels is appropriate, and how other interpretive issues should be resolved.

A more detailed discussion of faculty service and service teaching will be deferred until the next section, "Responsibilities and Expectations of Faculty."

The previous discussion has shown that HUC-JIR's adherence to its Policies and Procedures for reappointment, tenure, and promotion demonstrates its fulfillment of S10\_01, S10\_02 and S10\_10.

#### Research Question 10.4

*What is the full range of HUC-JIR's expectations of its faculty? Are current faculty resources sufficient to satisfy these expectations? What support does HUC-JIR give to faculty to enable them to meet these expectations? What impact do these expectations of faculty have on the appropriateness of the faculty workload, morale, and collegiality?*

As outlined in the Faculty Handbook, HUC-JIR's expectations of faculty are principally instruction, the production of scholarship, committee service, and service to the Reform movement and the broader Jewish community. As part of its inquiry, the working group undertook an investigation of the faculty's fulfillment of these expectations. This inquiry included consideration of: (1) the extent to which there are sufficient faculty resources to meet these expectations, (2) whether HUC-JIR provides sufficient institutional support to faculty to fulfill these expectations, and (3) whether and to what extent these expectations of faculty have changed over the past several years. This report also considers the impact of all this on faculty workload, morale, and collegiality.

#### *Instruction*

Instruction is obviously a key faculty responsibility, and one in which the HUC-JIR faculty takes pride and pleasure. The pedagogical excellence of HUC-JIR faculty members is also recognized outside the institution. In the past five years, two LA faculty members have been nominated for teaching awards at the University of Southern California.

Instruction at HUC-JIR is a multi-faceted task. HUC-JIR faculty members engage not only in classroom instruction (and now cross-campus and hybrid courses), but also instruct students by serving as academic, sermon, recital, and prayer service advisors, and by mentoring student theses, doctoral dissertations, and capstone projects. This report will take these up in turn.

The Faculty Handbook sets the standard course load for faculty at five courses per year. A review of available documentation of courses offered dating back to 2008 (2005 in LA) shows that this standard is largely, although not entirely, observed. Individual variations do occur. One reason is when courses—most likely electives—do not obtain a sufficient registration. In such cases, a faculty member unable to carry the standard load in a given year may take on additional service responsibilities, independent studies, or summer teaching. In one notable recent case, a NY faculty member who found herself without an enrollment in an elective course generously offered that time each week to assist students deficient in writing. This agrees with the Results of the Rabbinical Assessment of 2012SP, which recommends additional work on writing skills. Other recommendations from such program assessment might be used in similar ways to assign faculty time when the course load is not fulfilled. In general, the faculty should examine the phenomenon of insufficient course registration and the resulting non-fulfillment of teaching load. Smaller entering classes across HUC-JIR are a contributing factor. While an increase in student enrollment is the long-range solution, the faculty needs to explore innovations that would ensure equitable contributions to the College-Institute. Part of the exploration should include allowing students and faculty to broaden the definition of "course" or allowing non-course approaches to achieving *Practical* levels of learning outcomes on a consistent basis.

There is a commendable and growing tendency for HUC-JIR faculty to take pedagogical self-assessment very seriously. Pedagogical self-assessment has long been a part of the LA campus culture, where the Education School faculty began holding teaching seminars for faculty in all programs nearly ten years ago. Pedagogical self-assessment is now a feature throughout HUC-JIR. Over the past couple of years in NY, one faculty member has taken the initiative to

organize a faculty seminar on teaching. The CN and JR faculties also dedicate time at faculty meetings and retreats to discussions of pedagogy, including the opportunities and challenges posed by HUC-JIR's increasing focus on eLearning. Biennial all-campus faculty retreats that also dealt with these issues were temporarily suspended in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis and should be resumed.

To date, eLearning at HUC-JIR encompasses synchronous cross-campus courses conducted via videoconferencing, and two types of hybrids: online courses with asynchronous activity and live sessions (used in the Executive MA in Education Program, and now beginning in the Cantorial Certificate Program), and live or synchronous cross-campus courses that combine classroom instruction with other educational technologies (e.g., embedded videos and some online activities). The College-Institute is making rapid strides in incorporating eLearning into its institution-wide instruction (see also Chapter 7). Data provided by the National Director of eLearning show that since spring 2008, when distance learning was first used, forty-seven synchronous and twenty-two hybrid courses have been offered. Additionally, five distance learning courses have been offered for graduate students who are off-campus to join on-campus courses. These almost always involve a single remote student.

eLearning has the potential to benefit HUC-JIR and the faculty, although there are also challenges that must not be ignored. In general, HUC-JIR must move forward technologically to remain competitive with other seminaries and institutions of higher learning. Students enter HUC-JIR from institutions where they had access to the most current educational technology and they expect no less from the College-Institute. There are also other intellectual benefits and potential enhancements to the institutional culture from eLearning. Cross-campus courses expose faculty to students on other campuses, and vice versa. Significantly, cross-campus courses enable the sharing of expertise with students (and faculty colleagues) on another campus where it is otherwise unavailable. Recent examples include a NY faculty member who taught Ugaritic to graduate students in CN, and a CN faculty member who taught Christian Scriptures to NY students. Cross-campus courses also enable faculty to help out colleagues when a given area of expertise is temporarily unavailable on a given campus, whether due to retirements, illness, or sabbaticals. A recent example is a NY faculty member who taught rabbinic legal codes to LA students. Such cross-campus courses also save a local campus the expense of hiring a local adjunct. Another benefit of eLearning is that rethinking a classroom course for cross-campus presentation requires a fresh approach to the subject matter, which can be invigorating for both instructor and students. Another major benefit of distance courses is that they offer HUC-JIR the opportunity to expand its student body beyond its four campuses and thereby also to amplify its impact on the North American Jewish community.

Faculty members who are already active in eLearning are very excited about its pedagogical potential, especially the potential of hybrid courses to expand and deepen in-person instruction through embedded videos, threaded discussions, and shared documents. One faculty member, a pioneer in eLearning, has taught a very successful hybrid required course ("History of the Cantorate") for the past three years. The students attend class in person one day per week and then engage in some form of eLearning on the other day. One of the two faculty members who designed HUC-JIR's first online course in the Executive MA in Jewish Education program (XED-500: Leadership in Jewish Educational Settings) commented that it is "gratifying to be able to teach a course with national reach," and that the course "surprised its students who found the online resources to be engaging, creative and an opportunity to gain competence in the digital age."

Yet eLearning also poses challenges that HUC-JIR needs to recognize and address. Pedagogical challenges include first of all, the difficulty of picking up on physical, visual, or aural

cues when the instructor is in one location and the class in another. The NY faculty member who recently taught rabbinic codes to LA students has commented that it is difficult “to take the temperature” of the class from a distance. Second, forming personal bonds with students at a distance can also be difficult, and the weakness of these bonds may adversely impact the students’ learning. This latter challenge may be alleviated somewhat by sending the faculty member to spend time in person with the class. Indeed, students have remarked in their evaluations of distance-learning courses that in-person campus visits by distance-learning instructors were very well received. On the other hand, travel is expensive and time-consuming, and there is a limit to how much time a faculty member can spend on another campus. A third challenge is that, logistically, aligning the schedules of instructors and students on campuses across the continent is difficult. Finally, faculty members may not have time to undertake the extra development that distance learning requires.

The current staff of eLearning technologists provide technical, pedagogical, and technological support to faculty, including: (1) training faculty in using specific technologies for online courses (e.g., Google Docs), (2) helping Rabbinical School directors and faculty identify courses that might work well as cross-campus courses, (3) arranging room and equipment configuration and scheduling for these courses, (4) training faculty in “best practices” for cross-campus courses, and (5) training faculty in the use of SMARTBoard, PowerPoint, video, audio, etc., as well as in the conversion of texts, recordings, and images into appropriate digital formats.

Technologists also take on the time-consuming duty of sitting in on some cross-campus classes to ensure that everything runs smoothly. There is also no doubt that the number of educational technologists will need to increase as HUC-JIR offers more cross-campus, online, and hybrid courses. This increase in numbers will be expensive; in addition, HUC-JIR will also need to continue to spend money to upgrade the hardware and software necessary to make all these courses successful. Faculty members have already reported that insufficient bandwidth has surfaced as a concern in online courses. The need for HUC-JIR to spend more money on eLearning is inevitable, yet these increased expenditures undermine one of the early rationales the BoG and national administration proffered for venturing into this field: saving money by sharing faculty members across the four campuses. There is a danger in assuming that the impact of eLearning is equivalent to that of other forms of learning. It is important that this rationale for adjusting resources not be separated from student learning outcomes but be carried forward in a way that accounts for the differences in such outcomes from more traditional educational approaches.

The faculty members who taught the pioneering online course XED-500 note that they needed to work very hard to learn a new pedagogical and technological language in order to “translate” the course from an in-person to an online setting, and that there is virtually no specific expertise within HUC-JIR at present to train faculty in doing this. Both XED-500 faculty members emphasize the many hours they devoted to the course each week. One of them points out that “[i]t is very time-consuming. . . . it involves a great deal of immediate and intensive feedback to students who submit written answers and mini-essays each week.” Part of the reason the course has been so time-consuming for the instructors is undoubtedly the large number of students registered (twenty-four in the first year and twenty-nine in the second year), which is larger than the typical HUC-JIR course populated by students in residence.

Since the Faculty Handbook does not yet address eLearning as part of the instructional task, the additional time that must be invested in creating and teaching cross-campus and online courses is not yet (in the words of the Director of eLearning) “a meaningful aspect of Tenure and Promotion. . . [eLearning] lacks the institutional and collegial rewards and recognition needed to help embed it in the faculty culture.” The “faculty culture” does indeed include voices

that remain skeptical about eLearning on the grounds that in-classroom instruction will always be best, the time faculty members need to invest in eLearning is excessive, and the loss of direct interaction between instructors and students is too high a price to pay for what they see as an uncertain benefit.

Nevertheless, there are examples of faculty skeptics who were “converted” to greater interest in eLearning after teaching in an e-modality. In any case, the Director of eLearning is correct to observe that the Faculty Handbook (and the Policies and Procedures) must be updated to reflect the growing presence of eLearning at HUC-JIR.

Beyond classroom teaching, many faculty members devote time and energy to advising students, both formally, as academic advisors, and informally, as intellectual and religious mentors. Thesis and dissertation advising is another time-consuming activity of faculty. In CN, where at any given time there are dozens of students writing rabbinic theses or doctoral dissertations, faculty members often work with three to five students at once. Faculty members also serve as advisors for students’ fourth-year sermons, and in NY, as advisors to students in designing and leading prayer in a given week.

Another facet of the instructional task is faculty involvement in co-curricular programs for students. For example, faculty members

1. collaborate with the Institute for Jewish Spirituality to develop both the curricular and co-curricular components of the New York School Spirituality Initiative (NY)
2. serve on the local “Worship Working Group” (NY)
3. help organize or administer
  - a. the Gerech Family Institute for Outreach and Conversion (training students about the possibilities and challenges of intermarried families and conversion),
  - b. the Bonnie and Daniel Tisch Rabbinic Fellows Program (a competitive fellowship program only in NY designed to provide superior training in leadership to a select group of students),
  - c. the Mandel Initiative for Visionary Leadership (reflection groups that integrate student learning into developing a personal vision of Jewish religious leadership), and
  - d. the extensive service learning program based on the Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati Service Learning Grant.

This report will detail faculty involvement in these co-curricular programs below, under the heading “Faculty Involvement in Academic Program Development, Assessment, and Improvement.”

### *Production of Scholarship*

In its mission statement, HUC-JIR defines itself as a “religious and scholarly learning community dedicated to....advancing the critical study of Jewish culture and related disciplines in accordance with the highest standards of modern academic scholarship.” The Faculty Handbook recognizes that scholarly production “is a primary task of the College-Institute’s full-time Faculty,” and that commitment to scholarship “has been one of the defining activities of the Faculty of the College-Institute.” Moreover, it provides that faculty “must be on the cutting edge of scholarly developments,” and consequently faculty are “encouraged and . . . expected to participate in the work of professional societies and research groups. . . .” The BoG has resolved that HUC-JIR is “the academic arm of Reform Judaism dedicated to the study of Jewish and related disciplines in the spirit of free inquiry..... [HUC-JIR] stand[s] for freedom of research, publication, and instruction.”

The Table of Faculty Publication Activity provides evidence that the faculty fulfills its obligations in this area. Taking into consideration the faculty's involvement in learned societies, editorial boards, and publications, the faculty's record should be a tremendous source of pride to HUC-JIR. Indeed, the President and VPAA frequently express pride in, and appreciation for, the scholarship of individual faculty members and of the faculty as a whole.

Faculty are encouraged to publicize their scholarship via online news digests published by the Department of Public Relations. The deans, VPAA, and president periodically gather evidence of faculty scholarship for dissemination to key HUC-JIR stakeholders. Faculty members also publicize their scholarship through their own webpages that may include hyperlinks to their CV's and scholarship available online. HUC-JIR also provides tangible support for scholarship in the form of a travel and research fund, the administration of which is governed by a written policy. The fund is available to tenured/tenure-track faculty and emeriti, blended-track faculty, and faculty members who work as full-time administrators, prioritized in that order. Non-tenured/tenure-track faculty are not mentioned in the policy and may be presumed to be ineligible for the fund, although the policy does state that "[e]ligibility and faculty rank" are under the VPAA's direction. Although ineligible for the fund, adjunct faculty members are also productive scholars. One such NY faculty member is a leader in the Academy of Homiletics. HUC-JIR has also moved within the last decade to allow for one-semester sabbaticals every four years, rather than every seven.

Notwithstanding these tangible and other expressions of support for scholarship, there is a pervasive sense among many faculty members that HUC-JIR does not do enough to ensure that faculty have the quiet time they need to produce quality scholarship. A number of faculty members have pointed to a growing number of demands placed on their time to participate in various committees, attend various meetings, or participate in co-curricular activities. Moreover, as noted, faculty are required to be of service to the institutions of the Reform movement (as per the Faculty Handbook), and while faculty serve the movement energetically and with a sense of mission, there is no doubt that all these combined responsibilities take time away from study, research, thinking, and writing.

These faculty concerns are amplified by the sense documented in the VPAA's Academic Vision 2012 that some key stakeholders are not sufficiently aware of the importance of scholarship. Thus,

...around us, other institutions are promoting models of professional education which rely far less on an academic faculty model and far more on alternative approaches. Many of our key stakeholders are asking the question, motivated either by concern over our fiscal viability or uncertainty about our relevance and quality. Our deliberations come at a time when many of our assumptions about economic stability, denominational relevance, Jewish peoplehood, the future of liberalism, and much else are being profoundly challenged.

This is true notwithstanding these stakeholders' undoubted commitment to HUC-JIR and its faculty and students. It is of particular concern given that HUC-JIR's drive to balance budgets has led to cost-cutting decisions that impose additional service and administrative responsibilities on faculty in the absence of clear evidence of the decisions' impact on scholarship and instruction.

There is a sense among many faculty that the academic and financial arms of HUC-JIR do not communicate with each other sufficiently or effectively. Changes to the faculty role must only be made with the full involvement of faculty, with financial considerations informed and balanced by a robust embrace of a clear academic vision.

It is appropriate in this context to call attention to the VPAA's recently-circulated draft Academic Vision. He acknowledges in that document the need for HUC-JIR to demonstrate better to its stakeholders the linkage between scholarship and the work of its graduates. His point is well-taken, and the faculty has laid excellent groundwork in demonstrating the linkages between its scholarly work, its students, and the larger Jewish and American religious context in which it operates. To summarize: first, the faculty puts its scholarship to work in producing publications that serve the larger Jewish community, as demonstrated above. Second, the faculty teaches at numerous congregations, as well as at functions of relevant Reform Jewish organizations (URJ, CCAR, WUPJ, and NATE). It also takes leadership positions in these organizations especially to oversee clergy and educator mentoring. Faculty also take part in interfaith work; for example, a NY faculty member made a presentation at the Museum of Biblical Art on *Jerusalem: Sacred City of Three Faiths* (2012), a CN faculty member is a founding member of two institutes for Christian-Jewish relations, among other interfaith work, and an LA Faculty member is a leader in Muslim-Jewish engagement. Third, a survey of course offerings from 2008-11 shows that faculty members are mindful of the need to link their scholarship to their students' growth as clergy, educators, and Jewish communal workers. A sampling of such courses includes: Women and Torah, Personal Status, Capital Punishment, Teaching Talmud, Teaching Bible to Adult Learners, Reel Theology, and God: A Biography. The faculty is mindful of the need for linkage, and more must be done to make these linkages clear to HUC-JIR stakeholders.

#### *Service to the Reform Movement and Broader Jewish Community*

Working and studying in a Jewish institutional context, HUC-JIR's faculty and students are called upon to serve the Reform movement and the broader Jewish community. The faculty has obligated itself to perform such service in the Faculty Handbook, and faculty members do so energetically and with a sense of mission.

More than half the faculty list special services to the Reform community, including numerous presentations at functions of its rabbinical association, regional and national conventions, as well as many committees and editorial boards.

It is therefore clear that HUC-JIR faculty are fully engaged with scholarship, teaching (and with scholarship about teaching), service to the Reform movement and the wider Jewish community, and academic governance of HUC-JIR.

The faculty's dedication to self-assessment in pedagogy demonstrates HUC-JIR's adherence to S10\_03. HUC-JIR's support for faculty scholarship demonstrates adherence to S10\_04. The faculty's concern with linkages between scholarship, research, student learning, and service, described above, demonstrates adherence to S10\_05. The existence of a written policy governing the Travel & Research Fund shows adherence to S10\_06. Finally, HUC-JIR's encouragement of, and pride in, the wide-ranging scholarly projects of its faculty demonstrate its commitment to S10\_09. As noted, this commitment has also been clearly affirmed in a BoG resolution.

#### *Research Question 10.5*

*How are faculty involved in academic program development, assessment, and improvement?*

As noted at the outset of this chapter, HUC-JIR's Regulations provide for the shared responsibility of the faculty and VPAA in academic governance. The evidence shows that the faculty is fully involved in developing, assessing, and improving HUC-JIR's academic programs, fulfilling S10\_02. It has already been noted that each campus has a standing faculty committee

(however named) that deals with academic and curricular issues. This section will discuss faculty members' involvement in developing and assessing some major academic initiatives.

Within the past five years, NY faculty have undertaken major curricular revisions. The rabbinic faculty in NY thoroughly revised the rabbinic program's entire curriculum. Recently, the DFSSM Faculty in NY has formulated a new core curriculum that was implemented in 2009-10. These revisions are described in more detail here. More recently, the New York faculty have developed the New York School Spirituality Initiative to help students cultivate their religious lives by learning about and experiencing a variety of Jewish spiritual practices. Through coursework, spiritual direction, and extra-curricular learning opportunities, students are developing vocabulary and skills related to living a religious life that will sustain them at present and in their future careers. In addition, a large cohort of New York faculty are participating in a seminar on the spiritual formation of clergy.

In JR at present, the faculty is discussing two major curricular initiatives: doubling the number of semester hours devoted to rabbinic text instruction and combining classroom instruction with supervised student self-study; and re-examining the Hebrew language curriculum. Furthering the latter initiative, the JR faculty engaged in face-to-face discussions with North American colleagues in Jerusalem in June 2012.

The CN campus has recently been awarded a multimillion-dollar grant to advance service-learning that will help to integrate the academic with the practical aspects of the rabbinical program. This initiative was consistent with the findings of the Learning Outcomes Network assessment described in Chapter 8. Students will work with Jewish service agencies in the Cincinnati community while the faculty will be involved in the overall curriculum development as well as implementation and evaluation of the work of individual students.

HUC-JIR also has co-curricular programs that have academic components. Space considerations preclude a lengthy discussion of these, especially of the extensive programs funded by the Jim Joseph Foundation. This report will focus on several such programs, two of which apply to students on all North American campuses. The first is the Gerech Family Institute for Outreach and Conversion. The Gerech Family Institute is an endowed program that provides respected graduate and post-graduate training for HUC-JIR students and alumni in the areas of outreach and conversion. A NY faculty member directs the Institute, working with the directors of the rabbinical program on all stateside campuses, student interns, and colleagues from the URJ and elsewhere. The curriculum includes text study on the history and legal background of conversion within the many strands of Judaism, analysis of the psychological forces at work within people studying for conversion and their families, best practices for clergy, and the development of resources suitable to their particular occupational setting, among other areas.

The Mandel Initiative for Visionary Leadership began as a selective, cohort-based program of students in the Rabbinical School who were also adding a sixth year to complete the education degree. It has since become a co-curricular program in which all rabbinic, cantorial, and education students now participate, in the first three years of their program. Initiated in the Schools of Education by a senior LA faculty member working with a NY faculty member, it now involves several faculty members per campus selected by them, after consultation with the directors of the Rabbinical School.

There are other co-curricular programs with either voluntary or selective participation. One example of a selective co-curricular program intended for academically-talented students in NY is the Bonnie and Daniel Tisch Rabbinic Fellows Program in NY. The Tisch Fellowship program

was designed and is administered by a senior tenured faculty member as well as by an adjunct faculty member.

There is a consensus that co-curricular programs such as these (and others) enrich the students, as well as the faculty members who work in them. And as is appropriate and required, these programs are designed and administered by faculty. Yet there is a sense among many faculty members that the faculty as a whole has had insufficient input into the initial introduction of these programs into HUC-JIR, and that insufficient consideration has been given institution-wide to how these programs fit into or alongside the formal curriculum. One of the initiatives of the National Assessment Committee is to determine the extent to which such co-curricular programs support or compete with the formal curriculum. Chapter 7 includes a suggestion that the College-Institute consider outcomes transcripts. Such transcripts blur the lines between curricular and co-curricular; they also imply diverse innovations in educational structures. Such innovations would certainly affect faculty time in ways that need to be carefully assessed. The ultimate resolution for students is the sustained acquisition of the learning outcomes. Thus, the Learning Outcomes Network may ultimately help to resolve the questions of support or competition for students' time. It will be important to develop similarly powerful devices to account for faculty time.

The HUC-JIR faculty's work on developing, assessing, and improving academic programs demonstrates HUC-JIR's adherence to S10\_02.

## Suggestions for Improvement

1. The faculty should update the Policies and Procedures for Hiring, Promotion, and Tenure in the context of the decreasing numbers of full professors in order to maintain the five-person local Committee on Faculty with all members at or above the level of the person being reviewed.
2. Chairs of Committees on Faculty should share information with each other about how the local Committees interpret and apply the Policies and Procedures.
3. The faculty should review the Policies and Procedures to clarify the publication equivalencies implied in making promotion and tenure decisions, such as what types and aggregation of articles are equivalent to a scholarly book.
4. The faculty should formalize a comprehensive mentoring process for junior faculty.
5. The faculty should monitor variations from the standard 3-2 course load and explore innovations that would ensure equitable contributions to the College-Institute. Part of the exploration could include allowing students and faculty to broaden the definition of "course" or allowing non-course approaches to achieving *Practical* levels of learning outcomes on a consistent basis.
6. Assessment of eLearning must become a part of faculty deliberations on curriculum. The Faculty Handbook and Policies and Procedures must also be updated to take account of eLearning.
7. The tenured/tenure-track faculty in concert with the VPAA should implement better cross-campus integration of the criteria for hiring, evaluating, and retaining adjunct instructors, with due allowance for flexibility in response to local conditions.
8. **Of great importance:** There must be much more communication between the academic and financial arms of HUC-JIR. The faculty must determine whether responsibility for this communication should principally rest with the FC or AAC. The goal of the increased communication is to ensure that financial considerations alone do not drive changes in the role and/or size of faculty. It is important that any adjustment of resources not be separated from student learning outcomes.

9. Consideration should be given to establishing some body charged with the oversight of faculty workload. This oversight should include consideration of the time faculty members spend on endowed co-curricular projects, internal service activities, and any non-course learning activities being considered for an outcomes transcript.
10. Campuses without formal faculty involvement with their Boards of Overseers should consider ways to further this involvement while recognizing the functions of the faculty and Board of Governors.