

# New Faculty Enri

The chain of Jewish learning is embodied in the relationships forged at HUC-JIR, where students are mentored by innovative scholars who are gifted teachers. The extraordinarily low faculty-to-student ratio (among the lowest of any university or seminary in the world) means that students receive daily guidance and support from some of Judaism's best minds. This year, two gifted women have joined the faculty, where they are contributing their expertise and commitment to the learning community and helping to transform contemporary understanding of Jewish text, pedagogy, ritual, and liturgy.

World-renowned folk songwriter and performer **Debbie Friedman** is the newly appointed Instructor in Music at the School of Sacred Music at HUC-JIR/New York. Friedman's lyrical interpretations of liturgy and biblical verse have reached a generation of Jews looking to connect to the words of their heritage through music. A singer, songwriter, and guitarist, she has recorded 19 albums, including many songs that have become so much a part of many synagogues' liturgy as to be considered "traditional."

"Debbie Friedman is inspiring our students through her creativity and musical talents, helping to guide their spiritual and leadership development, and providing them with innovative strategies to transform congregations into communities of meaning," says Rabbi David Ellenson. "She is strengthening HUC-JIR's role in the area of worship renewal and revitalization in our day."

"It was *kol isha* (the voice of women) for *col isha* (every woman) that inspired me to write inclusive music," explains Debbie Friedman. "It is beneficial not only for women, but for men and children as well. Singing helps us learn how to be vocal. The more our voices are heard in song, the more we become our lyrics, our prayers, and our convictions."

Friedman is enriching the fabric of student life by teaching "Music as Midrash," a course for rabbinical, cantorial, and education students that explores the spiritual core of Jewish texts as a source for songs, sermons, and study. In addition, she serves as Artist-in-Residence, coaches cantorial students, and participates in worship services and other areas of the School of Sacred Music curriculum. The students in all pro-

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grams at the Cincinnati and Los Angeles campuses also benefit from her presence as visiting instructor during the course of the academic year.

In 1996 Friedman celebrated the 25th anniversary of her musical career with a concert at Carnegie Hall. She has performed in hundreds of cities in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Israel, and has appeared before national conventions and conferences for major Jewish organizations and particularly the Reform Movement, including the Union for Reform Judaism, National Association of Temple Educators, National Association of Temple Administrators, Central Conference of American Rabbis, Women of Reform Judaism, World Union for Progressive Judaism, and National Federation of Temple Youth.

She served as cantorial soloist for three years at the New Reform Congregation in Los Angeles, California. As a music educator, she directed the music component of the intensive Hebrew Chalutzim program at Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, where she continues to co-lead Hava Nashira, the annual song leading and music workshop she created. She has served on the faculty of HUC-JIR's Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health, and the Union for Reform Judaism's summer Kallah programs held at Brandeis University, the University of California at Santa Cruz, and Franklin Pierce College.

Emerging scholar and educator **Rabbi Tali E. Hyman** is the newly named Instructor in Jewish Education at HUC-JIR/Los Angeles. A lecturer there since July 2006, Rabbi Hyman is a member of the administrative team and faculty for the DeLeT (Day School Leadership through Teaching) Program at the Rhea Hirsch School of Education (RHSOE), dedicated to fostering teaching excellence in Jewish day schools in North America. DeLeT at HUC-JIR is conducted in consultation with its partner DeLeT program at Brandeis University. It carries out its mission by recruiting energetic, reflective people with Jewish commitments and a passion for learning, providing them with a 13-month fellowship program, preparing mentors to be reflective practitioners who can support a novice learning to teach, and encouraging schools to support ongoing teacher learning.

"Being given the opportunity to teach new ways of thinking about Jewish education, identity, and culture, in order to help students become the most responsible and effective change agents they can be, is a gift granted me each time I walk into a classroom, mentor an advisee, and equally, when I research and write," says Hyman. "I hope to build upon my colleagues' work of intensifying the intersections between theory and practice, bringing practitioners and academics ever closer in conversation, collaboration, and mutual enrichment."

Rabbi Hyman received an M.A. in Jewish Education from the RHSOE at HUC-JIR/Los Angeles in 2000, and was ordained as a rabbi at HUC-JIR/Los Angeles in 2002. She completed her doctoral coursework at New York University's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development as a Wexner Graduate Fellow, and will soon complete her dissertation, "An Ethnographic Investigation of the Role of Dissonance in a Community Jewish High School," that focuses on identifying various cultural strategies by which individuals and communities respond to dissonance inherent in Jewish identity building. She received the 2006 Young Scholar's Award from the Network for Research in Jewish Education and was granted a Writing Dissertation Fellowship for 2006-2007 by the National Foundation for Jewish Culture.

Rabbi Hyman's thinking about her research has been greatly enhanced by opportunities to share and exchange ideas with broader scholarly communities. Her recently published articles and presented papers include "Beyond Notions of Going Native: Jews Who Study Jews" (presented at Teacher's College); "At Home with Many Identities" (*Sh'ma Magazine*); and "Studying Jewish Identity: Emerging Trends and Challenges" (presented at Brandeis University). She is in the process of co-authoring a paper, with scholars of contemporary American Jewish identity Stuart Charmé, Bethamie Horowitz, and Jeffrey Kress, which offers new theoretical and methodological approaches to researching Jewish identity. She served a two-year term as the Book Review Editor for the *Journal of Jewish Education* (2004-2006).



*Debbie Friedman,  
Instructor in Music,  
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