

New Faculty Enrich Teaching



Rabbi Joshua
Garroway, Ph.D.

Scholar, teacher, mentor...the faculty at HUC-JIR fulfill multi-dimensional roles, as they instruct their students, forge innovative research in the vanguard of Jewish studies, and serve as role models for spiritual, professional, and intellectual development. Three new members of the faculty have joined the HUC-JIR community this year. Their diverse areas of expertise are enriching the fabric of learning, while their commitment to teaching within our Reform seminary environment strengthens the College-Institute's mission.

An expert in Jewish identity in the ancient world, the origins of Christianity, Jewish-Christian relations in late antiquity, and postmodern historiography, **Rabbi Joshua Garroway, Ph.D.**, is the newly appointed Assistant Professor of Early Christianity and Second Commonwealth at HUC-JIR/Los Angeles. He was ordained at HUC-JIR/Cincinnati in 2003 and received his doctorate in New Testament Studies at Yale in 2008. His doctoral dissertation, "Neither Jew nor Gentile, but Both: Paul's 'Christians' as 'Gentile-Jews,'" explores the ways in which Paul's epistle to the Romans constructs Jewish identity, and the role this played in the ensuing emergence of Christianity.

"In returning to HUC-JIR as a faculty member, Dr. Garroway brings a solid grounding in the Reform rabbinate as well as in academic life," says Rabbi David Ellenson. "We take pride in his intellectual achievement as one of our alumni, and look forward to his contributions to our community."

Dr. Garroway relates to the HUC-JIR community with a profound appreciation for the vitality of faculty-student interchange. "The commitment and enthusiasm of the students at the Los Angeles campus have made teaching them, learning from them, and praying alongside them an immensely rewarding experience," says Garroway. "Already I have become acutely aware of the reciprocity inherent in the teaching process. In my interactions with the students, I am often the one who is enlightened, challenged, or inspired."



Dr. Meir Seidler

As the newly appointed Assistant Professor of Jewish Thought at HUC-JIR/LA, **Dr. Leah Hochman** brings her scholarly interests to the intersections of thought, philosophy and religion, the relationships between religion and literature in fiction, memoir, and autobiography, Judaism in the Americas, and Jewish life and culture in contemporary Germany. Her doctoral work at Boston University, where she earned her Ph.D. in 2000, focused on the aesthetic theory of Moses Mendelssohn. Her current research deals with the concepts of the Ugly and Ugliness in 18th century European thought. Before coming to HUC-JIR, Dr. Hochman taught at the University of Florida and Boston University.

"Dr. Hochman's intellectual rigor and interdisciplinary approach will be a source of enrichment for our students, and we welcome her to the HUC-JIR family," said Rabbi Ellenson.

Dr. Hochman values the special qualities of the HUC-JIR community. "The close-knit connections of the HUC-JIR faculty, students, and staff have made my move to Los Angeles – and to the small, intense seminary environment – an easy and pleasant transition," says Dr. Hochman. "Welcoming new additions to campus brings out the best in everyone."

Dr. Meir Seidler is HUC-JIR's first Visiting Professor of Israel Studies, a joint appointment by HUC-JIR/LA with the University of Southern California (USC), for the 2008-2009 academic year, to be followed in 2009-2010 with an additional joint appointment by HUC-JIR/NY with the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (JTS) in New York. These visiting faculty positions have been made possible by a grant from the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation in conjunction with the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprises' Scholar Development Fund. HUC-JIR's matching grant for this project has been generously funded by Lief Rosenblatt and Elliott and Robin Broidy.

“Israel Studies lies at the heart of our mission, as we seek to train Jewish leaders who are steeped in the concept of Jewish peoplehood and nurtured by the enduring ties linking the State of Israel and Diaspora Jewry,” says Rabbi Ellenson. “As a leading Israeli scholar, Dr. Meir Seidler will further reinforce our students’ relationship with the people and land of Israel, building upon their required first year of study of the history, politics, and culture of Israel and intensive Hebrew language studies at our Jerusalem campus.”

Dr. Seidler’s area of academic specialization is Jewish Thought in the Modern Era. He received the M.A. in Comparative Religion from Philipps University in Marburg, Germany, and a Ph.D. in Jewish Philosophy from Bar-Ilan University in Israel, where his doctoral dissertation was titled “The Concept of Judaism as a ‘Religion of Law’: Spinoza, Mendelssohn, Samson Raphael Hirsch and Isaac Breur.” Dr. Seidler has taught at Ariel University Center in Samaria in the Department of Israel Heritage and at Bar-Ilan University’s Centre of Jewish Studies. His extensive publications include numerous articles and two books: *Shma Yisrael - Oneness. The Jewish Perspective*, and *A Controversy that Endures. The Secession Controversy (1877) - The Open Letters Correspondence between the Rabbis Samson Raphael Hirsch and Seligmann Baer Bamberger*. He served as Co-Editor of *Moreshet Israel - Journal of Judaism and Zionism* (2004-2007).

Dr. Seidler appreciates HUC-JIR as a special destination in his life’s journey. “Having spent my childhood and youth in Europe with only few Jews around, and now living and teaching in Israel, teaching in the U.S. in general and at HUC-JIR in particular provides me with an excellent opportunity to learn something about a substantial part of the Jewish people with whom I was not acquainted,” says Dr. Seidler. “I am grateful for the warm welcome I received here and I am impressed by the quality of the faculty and the students, by the vitality of the community, as well as by its thirst for learning and its commitment to the Jewish State.”