

## **Spring 2025   Azrieli Course Descriptions**

### **Core Courses**

#### **Learning and Cognition   3 credits**

This course examines student thinking and learning through the perspectives of cognitive and learning science. It includes an introduction to cognitive science focusing on representations used to model student knowledge and thinking, and how these can be used to describe student learning over the short- and long-term. Finally, the course will focus on how these representations of knowledge and learning can enhance teaching practice in classroom settings.

#### **Models of Teaching II   3 credits**

Models II is a framework of thinking about and learning with all students, by matching learner to learning through proactive planning, multiple approaches to content, process, product, and environment, and a blend of whole-class, group and independent learning. This course focuses on the knowledge, understanding, and skill related to differentiated instruction, including planning for, assessing and managing classrooms with diverse students.

*Prerequisite: EDU 5120 Models of Teaching*

#### **Promoting Jewish Values   3 credits**

In this course, a practical approach is taken to the field of moral development, values education and the psychology of religion, informed both by psychological theory and Jewish thought. The major focus of the course is on practical educational applications of the fields of positive psychology and social emotional learning. Specific topics in values education and religious education are presented in the context of recent research findings, Judaic perspectives, and implications for educators working in Jewish schools. In addition to weekly readings, discussion boards, and reflections, students are expected to prepare a module on a value of their choice to present to peers, and design lesson plans on that topic for their students.

### **Electives**

#### **Philosophical Dilemmas in Jewish Education   3 credits**

This synchronous, interactive online course engages participants with primary and secondary Jewish texts to examine critical educational dilemmas. Each session focuses on a specific dilemma, supported by a review of seminal articles on the topic. Participants analyze the practical and theoretical implications of each dilemma, fostering meaningful discussions on its relevance to their classrooms and educational approaches. We will also discuss teaching strategies.

(continued below)

Key dilemmas explored include:

- When religious education crosses into indoctrination.
- Balancing faith commitments with critical thinking in religious pedagogy.
- Gender issues in the classroom
- The limits and possibilities of integrating general and Jewish studies.
- How knowledge acquisition may contribute to the erosion of religious practice.
- The impact of role modeling on teacher identity and authenticity.

By the end of the course, students will have developed a deeper understanding of complex educational challenges in Jewish day school education, enhanced ability to critically evaluate different perspectives, and gained practical insights to inform their educational practice.

### **Teaching Tefillah            3 credits**

Tefillah presents significant challenges in day school education. This course examines the factors contributing to the negative experiences often associated with morning services and explores practical strategies to transform them into meaningful moments. The tension between keva and kavanah will be analyzed, with insights drawn from the perspectives of great Jewish philosophers on praying with kavanah. Research on the development of children's and adolescents' attitudes toward tefillah is reviewed to inform approaches that nurture students' spiritual growth and strengthen their connection to prayer within minyanim, classrooms, and their personal lives.

### **Teaching Bible – Navi        3 credits**

This course maximizes the use of Nevi'im Rishonim (in elementary school) and Nevi'im Aharonim (in secondary school) as educational resources through the analysis of student motivation, learning styles and development, and the selection of appropriate texts and commentaries. Various instructional and assessment modalities are analyzed.

### **Teaching Machshava        3 credits**

The goal of this course is to help educators learn core methodologies, approaches, materials, strategies and challenges related to teaching Jewish thought. The course explores many topics within machshava, hashkafa and philosophy, with consideration for how to best incorporate the topics within lesson and unit plans. Strategies for incorporating Jewish thought in both machshava and non-machshava based classes is explored.

## **Other**

### **Portfolio - 0 Credits – Billed as 1 Credit**

Taken in the last semester before graduation, students are required to submit a Professional Portfolio demonstrating their growth and learning at Azrieli and the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions of a Jewish educator. After an introductory module explaining the nature and requirements for the portfolio, students compile their portfolio in a self-paced manner and submit by a noted deadline. Portfolio is graded on a Pass/Fail basis, with extensive feedback offered by the instructor.

**PEP - Professional Enhancement Practicum II                      3 credits**

PEP (Student Teaching) is a 6-credit practicum that extends over the course of the full academic year. PEP includes a seminar course that meets approximately 15 times over the course of entire academic year to reflect on teaching and learning and discuss practical teaching challenges and applications, in a collaborative environment. In addition to the seminar, students in PEP are observed and mentored by an Azrieli supervisor in their actual classrooms a few times over the course of the academic year. The PEP experience is closely tied to the students' actual teaching experience and is highly personalized to the growth needs of the individual teacher. The course requires that students serve as head teacher, assistant teacher, or intern (nonpaid placement by Azrieli) in a formal Jewish educational setting.

To complete PEP requirements, students must register for PEP I in the Fall (3 credits) and PEP II in the Spring (3 credits).

**Curriculum Internship II                      3 credits**

The Curriculum Internship is a 2-semester course offered to students who are interested in learning about curriculum in depth as an alternative to the PEP (student teaching) experience. Students acquire the necessary skills for curriculum analysis and development. Course topics include philosophy of education, curriculum models, curriculum design and implementation, alignment to mission and values, assessment alignment, standards and benchmarks in Jewish education, and big ideas and essential understandings in the Judaic Studies subject.