



Summary Academy Track at the Koret Center Annual Conference

April 27-28 2023, Anu, Tel Aviv

Caveat

The participants emphasized that the primary objective of Jewish studies is academic in nature, and any ancillary benefits to the Jewish community should be regarded as secondary. The paramount consideration is academic credibility, and any involvement by the Koret Center must be approached with prudence to preclude any perception of politicization.

The Gap

- There is a shortage of qualified teachers, limited opportunities for growth, and a lack of prestige for the academic field, which have resulted in limited academic careers within Jewish studies.
- Additionally, there is a decline in student interest and a decrease in the perceived value of Jewish studies.
- The politicization of the academy and the rise of cancel culture have further complicated matters.
- In comparison to applied sciences, Jewish ideas and history often receive less funding.
- Finally, there is a lack of shared understanding of key concepts in Judaism, which can impede the progress of research in the field.

The Response:

- It is important to encourage collaboration and engagement between educators and academics from Israel and around the world. The Koret Center can play a key role in facilitating such activities.
- Additionally, there is a need to increase funding for Jewish studies by engaging new potential sources.
- - Developing and incentivizing a strategic list for academic research, through the engagement of contributors in this track, can help prioritize important areas of inquiry.
- Complementary academic training, including training in media and social media, can help academics and researchers effectively communicate their findings to a broader audience.
- Establishing a new model of learning, such as Beit Midrash, can provide a more immersive and interactive learning experience.

- Finally, creating exchange programs to ensure that students spend a year in Israel can provide a valuable opportunity for cultural immersion and academic enrichment.

The Mission:

- Increasing funding for can be achieved through initiatives such as the "Jewish corporate responsibility" initiative (engaging hi-tech sector and corporates in Israel) and the creation of scholarships for Jewish and Israel studies.
- To make research accessible to the general public, it is important to establish a media and communication team that utilizes mass social and traditional media.
- A multidisciplinary engagement can be fostered by creating an informal complimentary academic experience such as history on the bar and more popular science textbooks.
- Developing new models of learning, such as Beit Midrash, can provide a more immersive and interactive learning experience.
- Finally, increasing community engagement can be accomplished by connecting local communities with Jewish and Israel studies students and scholars from around the world.

Additional Insights and Relevant Information:

- Jewish studies can play a crucial role in strengthening identity, providing insight into Jewish culture and identity, contributing to a renewed connection to Judaism, and producing the next generation of Israeli thinkers.
- Multiperspective and career development are essential components of Jewish studies, as they promote a broader and more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, as well as provide students with a path towards professional development.
- To remain relevant in the current social and political climate, it is important to address the gaps mentioned earlier and adapt Jewish studies to reflect the changing needs and concerns of students, scholars, and society as a whole.