



Evaluation of the **Jim Joseph Foundation Education Initiative**

Year 2 Report

Submitted to the Jim Joseph Foundation

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Executive Summary

The Jim Joseph Foundation's Education Initiative funds the development, operational costs, and scholarships for 18 degree, certificate, and leadership programs at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), and Yeshiva University (YU). The Jim Joseph Foundation supports each of these institutions in expanding and improving their educator and leader preparation programs. The three institutions have been awarded \$15 million each to support the field of Jewish education through the development and enhancement of advanced degree, leadership, and certificate programs; improvement of recruitment activities; and induction support to new teachers and education leaders. At the conclusion of the Education Initiative in 2015–16, more than 1,000 educators are expected to have received degrees or credentials in Jewish education with the support of the Foundation. Of these 1,000 educators, it is expected that more than 200 graduates will have completed full-time graduate degree programs and will then fill open positions in the Jewish education workforce.

The Education Initiative has three goals for educator preparation and support and two capacity-building goals.

Educator Preparation and Support Goals	Capacity-Building Goals
Goal 1. Increase the number of highly qualified individuals who enroll in Jewish education advanced degree, certificate, and leadership programs.	Goal 4. Develop the infrastructure that will enable sustainability of the programs supported by the Education Initiative.
Goal 2. Provide programs that prepare educators and education leaders to teach, inspire, and enrich education experiences in a variety of settings.	Goal 5. Identify areas of programmatic and inter-institutional collaboration that can improve program quality and make improvements sustainable.
Goal 3. Increase the number of educators and education leaders placed, retained, and promoted in a variety of settings.	

American Institutes for Research (AIR) is conducting an ongoing, five-year, independent evaluation of the Jim Joseph Foundation's Education Initiative. The evaluation has been primarily formative in the beginning years and will produce summative conclusions about programs based on longitudinal trends. This report, the second in a series of five annual reports, focuses on two main research questions:

1. What were the accomplishments, challenges, and lessons learned with regard to providing programs to educators and education leaders?
2. What progress have grantees made toward building capacity for financial sustainability?

The evaluation team collected data using six sources:

1. Online surveys of current participants of degree, certificate, and leadership programs
2. Online surveys of alumni of nine degree and certificate programs
3. Online surveys of individuals who inquired about programs but did not apply
4. Phone surveys with employers of current and past participants of certificate and leadership programs
5. Interviews with presidents, deans, and project coordinators
6. Administrative records describing students' enrollment and other characteristics such as preprogram employment and current employment.

FINDINGS FOR GOAL 1. Increase the number of highly qualified individuals who enroll in preservice and inservice Jewish education programs.

Most of the programs supported by the Education Initiative met their enrollment goals; however, they selected new students from a limited pool of applicants. Three of the 18 programs did not meet their enrollment goals. Most of the other programs, which had enrollment goals varying from 8 to 28 seats, received a slightly higher number of applications than the number enrolled. A low number of applications creates several challenges in terms of program quality and financial sustainability by (a) reducing institutional ability to ensure that they have accepted individuals who are a good match for the programs; (b) putting institutions at risk of spending full program operation costs on small class sizes, decreasing operating margins; and (c) reducing the ability to negotiate tuition discounts with applicants.

Analysis of survey data identified three main themes that can promote enrollment in degree, certificate, and leadership programs. The first theme is program design—the extent to which programs offered structure and content that were attractive to and met the needs of targeted audiences. The most highly ranked factor that influenced enrollment decisions was the opportunity to connect and interact with other professionals in the field. Institution reputation, financial assistance, distance learning, and modularization of certificate programs were other highly influential factors. The second theme is the nature of recruitment strategies—the outreach activities that informed different target audiences about the programs available to them. Effective messaging addressed the professional aspirations of prospective students and clarified in what ways these programs were unique. In addition, effective recruitment was based on relationship building rather than a one-time event. The third theme is student retention—the extent to which programs had a learning environment conducive to retaining program participants. Because of their small class size, program coordinators need to place a special value on student retention efforts. Survey data indicated that participants with positive mentoring experiences were less likely to consider leaving the program than their peers without positive mentoring experiences.

FINDINGS FOR GOAL 2. Provide programs that prepare educators and education leaders to teach, inspire, and enrich education experiences in a variety of settings.

Participants acquired a greater ability to define and articulate goals for their programs and schools. Participants reported that their program gave them the right tools to shape curriculum planning, staffing decisions, professional development plans, and evaluation of current services for the communities they serve. The professional vocabulary gained at their programs enabled them to articulate values and goals and promote a shared understanding of ways to offer high-quality instruction. All of the employers interviewed observed substantial professional growth of their staff as a result of program participation. Most of the employers provided opportunities for these staff to take more active roles in decision-making processes due to their employees' program participation.

Participants gained a better understanding of the significance of their work. Participants indicated that they saw their work in a different light and felt the need to share that perspective with other professionals. Some of the participants felt that they could communicate in more depth with stakeholders and other partner organizations about what their school or organization does and about how partnerships with other organizations could be successful.

The programs supported by the Education Initiative enabled participants to promote professional learning communities at their schools and organizations. Participants trained staff using the content of courses they have taken. Consequently, their colleagues began using a shared vocabulary and engaged in discussions about instructional improvement. Employers observed that having lead teachers and directors receive the education supported by the Education Initiative raised the bar in terms of expectations of staff knowledge and what training their staff members should receive.

Most program participants reported that they have been inspired by their programs to create new programs or initiatives. Data also indicated that most of the employers of participants in these programs permitted participants to try out new initiatives at their schools or organizations based on what they have learned.

Learning in Israel prepared participants to plan education experiences and teach about Israel. Survey data show that learning in Israel was associated with a high motivation to pursue Israel education work within the Jewish community as well as a sense of better preparedness to plan and lead education activities about Israel.

FINDINGS FOR GOAL 3. Increase the number of educators and education leaders placed, retained, and promoted in a variety of settings.

A master's degree in Jewish education enabled graduates to find jobs in leadership positions. Survey data indicated that all alumni of the master's programs supported by the Education Initiative who sought a job were able to find one. Most of the job placements were in leadership roles (e.g., directors, assistant directors, school heads, and program coordinators). When searching for these positions, HUC-JIR and JTS alumni reported that their master's degree in Jewish education gave them an advantage over other job candidates. Alumni felt that their master's degree opened doors for jobs that otherwise may have not been available to them.

Participants in the certificate and leadership programs felt that their programs increased their market value. Participants believed that the programs lead education institutions to consider them for positions that otherwise would have been out of their reach. One third of the participants felt that the program put them on a track for promotion.

FINDINGS FOR GOAL 4. Develop the infrastructure that will enable sustainability of the programs supported by the Education Initiative.

Three main factors may hinder the ability of programs to recover operating costs: small class size, large tuition discounts, and high program development and operating costs. Most of the programs (both online and face-to-face) are capped at fewer than 25 seats. Although small class size may be responsive to participants' needs and instructors' workload, it is not cost effective. With the current level of program costs and tuition value, the programs are not large enough to collect tuition revenue sufficient for cost recovery. Second, all grantees believe that financial aid should always be available to ensure that programs are accessible to qualified prospective students. Interviews with grantees indicated that each institution will increase its efforts to identify optimal tuition prices that do not entail a full tuition waiver and, at the same time, will remain attractive to prospective students. Third, in addition to operating costs, programs anticipate ongoing development costs. All grantees indicated a need to regularly update their programs in order to keep pace with the developing education field and instructional technology tools. The initial investment of money for faculty to develop courses will need to be supplemented by additional development expenses every two or three years.

FINDINGS FOR GOAL 5. Identify areas of programmatic and inter-institutional collaboration that can improve program quality and make improvements sustainable.

Inter-institutional collaboration has been demonstrated primarily through three major projects carried out by the grantees. As part of the Education Initiative, HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU have all developed experiential Jewish education programs and view these programs as a way to engage today's Jewish youth and help them connect to and deepen their Jewish identity. Experiential education directors from HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU have worked together to refine and improve their respective programs. A second collaborative activity is the Jewish Early Childhood Education Leadership Institute (JECALI), which has been jointly planned and overseen by HUC-JIR and JTS. JECALI¹ targets new and aspiring directors of early Jewish education programs and, so far, has demonstrated high satisfaction of its participants. Finally, HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU launched the eLearning Collaborative, which aims to increase the number of faculty members who are trained to provide high-quality instruction using educational technology and, ultimately, the number of online or blended courses at the three institutions.

Results from a faculty survey suggested that faculty members at HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU perceived inter-institutional collaboration favorably. Most of the faculty members surveyed believed that their school could achieve its goals better when working with other schools (regardless of their denomination). They were interested in building on a professional network outside their institution to grow their knowledge. In addition, faculty members wanted to learn about the use of educational technology in other higher education institutions as well as in other courses within their school.

¹ The program website is available at <http://jecali.org>.

CONCLUSIONS

Taken together, the findings indicate that the Education Initiative has changed the practice of a growing number of Jewish educators and education leaders, inspired and equipped working professionals with the skills to create new initiatives (e.g., instructional improvement, staff training), and helped program participants earn the respect of employers and colleagues. Alumni who sought new jobs after graduation reported that their training made them more attractive in the applicant pool in terms of expertise in teaching in Jewish education settings.

With those accomplishments in mind, there is still uncertainty about the nature and scope of programs as well as their financial sustainability. Specifically, two challenges regarding financial sustainability stem from the nature of the programs developed to date.

The first challenge is the need to continue to meet enrollment goals while reducing student financial assistance. The grantees have met their recruitment goals for the master's programs at a time in which national statistics show a decline in the overall number of new graduate students (Allum, Bell, & Sowell, 2012). There is no doubt that offering full scholarships facilitated reaching this goal. However, to make programs financially sustainable, grantees need to attract talented candidates while reducing the amount of scholarships offered. Survey data suggested that at least one third of the participants in HUC-JIR's and JTS' master's programs would enroll anyway if financial assistance were not available. Expanding recruitment efforts to increase the number of applications may yield a sufficient number of tuition-paying applicants to cover at least part of the program costs.

The second challenge involves the cost-effectiveness of the online and blended programs. Grantees were successful in diversifying their student body through online and blended programs. However, analysis of the programs' cost structure revealed that the development and operating costs of these programs exceeded the revenues collected through tuition and fees. The difference between the costs and revenues was large enough to suggest that it cannot be made up by tuition increases alone. Restructuring in a way that reduces operating costs may be necessary; for example, by increasing the number of students enrolled.

In the third year of the evaluation of the Education Initiative, the addition of new data as well as monitoring the longer experience of graduating participants in the workforce will allow the evaluation team to address additional research questions, such as:

- What can we learn about the effect of the certificate and leadership programs on classroom excellence and the way that schools, camps, youth groups, and community centers engage their communities in Jewish education?
- What can we learn about the career paths of alumni who have benefited from the Education Initiative?
- Who are the career changers, educators, and education leaders who have benefited by the Education Initiative so far, and how do they compare with the potential market of the programs offered?
- How can a better understanding of the potential market assist grantees in strategizing towards the long-term sustainability of their programs?

These analyses will aim to provide information to stimulate critical discussions around student recruitment, program design, and alumni connections, and to widen our understanding of the outcomes of the Education Initiative.



Year 2 Report: Introduction

The Jim Joseph Foundation is currently funding the development, operational costs, and scholarships for 18 degree, certificate, and leadership programs at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), and Yeshiva University (YU). Launched in 2010, the Jim Joseph Foundation Education Initiative is supporting each of these flagship Jewish higher education institutions in expanding and improving its educator and leader preparation programs. The three institutions have each been awarded \$15 million to support the field of Jewish education through the development and enhancement of advanced degree, leadership, and certificate programs; improvement of recruitment activities; and induction support to new teachers and education leaders. At the conclusion of the Education Initiative in 2015–16, more than 1,000 educators are expected to receive degrees or credentials in Jewish education with the support of the Jim Joseph Foundation. More than 200 graduates are expected to complete full-time graduate degree programs and will fill open positions in the Jewish education workforce through this Initiative.

The development of new programs under the Education Initiative was based on the belief that this generation, more than past generations, needs engaging, innovative, and developmentally appropriate practices in education settings. This task requires greater breadth and depth in engaging young Jewish people (Firestone & Gildiner, 2010; Kelman & Schonberg, 2008)—*breadth* to offer social interactions that connect individual to Jewish experiences and *depth* to address the need of young people to understand the meaning of Jewish experiences.

There were three pillars that guided the Education Initiative’s new program development:

1. Education leaders can reimagine Jewish education programs.

The education field is transforming. Rapid developments in education research about effective instructional practices (Learning Point Associates, 2007), a growing focus on student engagement (Christenson, Reschly, & Wylie, 2012), and more sophisticated use of technology (Shechtman, DeBarger, Dornsife, Rosier, & Yarnall, 2013) are some of the contextual factors driving the revitalization of Jewish education. These transformative practices are in demand in all settings of Jewish education, especially in congregational schools (Woocher, Rubin Ross, & Woocher, 2008).

Educational leadership is key to continual school improvement through innovation (Dove & Freeley, 2011; Spiro, 2013). With the growing responsibilities of education leaders, schools and organizations have recognized the need to add positions for qualified staff who can envision and coordinate programs. For example, more congregations are now hiring full-time education directors (Jewish Education Service of North America, 2007).

Accordingly, there has been a call for greater efforts to identify and nurture leaders of all levels in Jewish education (Baker, 2012; Sales, 2007); however, local efforts to grow leaders have proven insufficient. For example, interviews conducted by Lewis (2004) indicated that a wide range of organizations, from Hillel International to the Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation to the Jewish Community Centers (JCC) Association, increased their budgets for leadership development. Despite these efforts, several years later, schools and education programs continued to cite a shortage of qualified candidates for leadership positions, including school heads and directors (JESNA, 2008; Palevsky, 2006; Schick, 2007; Wertheimer, 2007). Generally speaking, there is an anticipated growing deficit in the number of individuals qualified to lead and manage

nonprofit organizations (Simms & Trager, 2009; Tiereny, 2006). Recognizing this need, a number of the programs supported by the Education Initiative have been designed to prepare professionals for leadership positions.

2. Education leaders should be aware of the potential benefits of experiential education.

Experiential education is a philosophy that informs instructional practice so that educators purposefully engage with learners in discovery and exploration activities and reflection to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and link ideas with real-world situations (Association for Experiential Education, 2013). This approach, which is not new, has been referred to in the past as “learning by doing” (Dewey & Dewey, 1915) and “experience-based learning” (Wolfe & Byrne, 1975), and is increasingly being used to avoid “replicating old programs for a new generation” (Reimer & Bryfman, 2008, p. 349). Drawing on the characterization of informal Jewish education (e.g., Chazan, 1991), the idea of experiential learning suggests fun, engaging activities that may involve collaborative learning and socialization experiences (Reimer & Bryfman, 2008). Educators may design such activities to promote Jewish literacy, including the understanding of Jewish history and tradition as well as acquisition of Hebrew language skills (Young, 2012). In his study of best practices of supplementary Jewish schools, Wertheimer (2009) concluded that effective schools create opportunities for students to engage in experiential Jewish learning.

Each of the grantees designed programs to train educators for implementing experiential Jewish education. Although each program targets different populations and offers differing pedagogical formats, they all attempt to advance the understanding of experiential education. One program is a full-time master’s track, while the other programs are certificate and leadership programs that offer online workshops, in-person seminars, mentoring, and support for independent projects conducted by participants at their workplaces.

3. Education technology, especially using online delivery, can help schools meet their goals.

Many Jewish young people already take advantage of a rich array of websites and social media for informational, educational, and entertainment purposes. For more than a decade, school administrators and teachers have been challenged to identify, use, evaluate, and promote appropriate technologies to enhance and support instruction (The Collaborative for Technology Standards for School Administrators, 2001). Moreover, online learning has become a way to overcome time, distance, and social barriers to education and social interactions. In higher education, results from a meta-analysis of 99 studies indicated that online learning can be an effective option for undergraduates, graduate students, and professionals (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development, 2010). Under the Education Initiative, grantees developed and launched three online-only certificate programs (YU’s certificate programs in Differentiated Instruction, Educational Technology, and Online/Blended Instruction and Design) and four blended (i.e., part online, part face-to-face) certificate and leadership programs (JTS’ Jewish Experiential Education Leadership Institute, HUC-JIR’s Certificate in Adolescents and Emerging Adults, and the JTS/HUC-JIR joint Jewish Early Childhood Education Leadership Institute). In addition, JTS has continued to develop its distance learning master’s track and YU has established its online master’s program, which will be launched in the 2013–14 school year. HUC-JIR’s Executive Master’s (EMA) program enables busy professionals to complete their degree while simultaneously performing their job duties. EMA offers in-person intensive seminars supplemented by e-learning courses.

The Jim Joseph Foundation defined five goals for the Education Initiative. Exhibit 1 provides an overview of the Foundation’s goals for this initiative: three goals for educator preparation and support and two capacity-building goals.

Goals 1–3 of the Education Initiative were established on the premise that high-quality certificate and degree programs, financial assistance, and opportunities for job placement will encourage individuals to consider careers in Jewish education or seek additional training to deepen their current work in Jewish education. The initiative aims to attract talented young people interested in becoming professional Jewish educators, train experienced and effective educators to become mentors and role models, and equip Jewish educators to provide first-rate education in their workplaces and serve as visionary education leaders.

The Education Initiative also requires its recipients to work toward long-term capacity building to ensure that they will continue to offer high-quality degree, certificate, and leadership programs after the end of the initiative (Goals 4 and 5). Grantees are expected to identify ways to cover the operating costs of programs as well as establish venues for inter-institutional collaboration that may enable the use of joint resources for program development.

Exhibit 1. The Five Goals of the Jim Joseph Foundation Education Initiative

Educator Preparation and Support Goals	Capacity-Building Goals
<p>Goal 1. Increase the number of highly qualified individuals who enroll in Jewish education advanced degree, certificate, and leadership programs.</p>	<p>Goal 4. Develop the infrastructure that will enable financial sustainability of the programs supported by the Education Initiative.</p>
<p>Goal 2. Provide programs that prepare educators and education leaders to teach, inspire, and enrich education experiences in a variety of settings.</p>	<p>Goal 5. Identify areas of programmatic and inter-institutional collaboration that can improve program quality and make improvements sustainable.</p>
<p>Goal 3. Increase the number of educators and education leaders placed, retained, and promoted in a variety of settings.</p>	

American Institutes for Research (AIR) is conducting an independent evaluation of the Education Initiative. This report is the second in a series of five annual reports that describe progress made toward accomplishing the goals of the Jim Joseph Foundation Education Initiative. The evaluation is primarily formative in the beginning years but will produce summative conclusions about the value and worth of each program based on longitudinal trends. This year’s evaluation addresses two main questions:

1. What were the accomplishments, challenges, and lessons learned with regard to providing programs to educators and education leaders?
2. What progress have grantees made toward financial sustainability?

This Year 2 report aims to identify lessons learned across institutions based on input garnered from a variety of sources (e.g., participants, employers, and faculty). The following sections briefly summarize the methodology of the Year 2 evaluation.



Data Collection and Analysis in Year 2 of the Evaluation

This report uses data collected through surveys, interviews, and administrative records. These data collection methods are briefly described below.

Current Participant Online Survey

This survey included 47 questions about factors affecting enrollment, program impact on professional growth, and respondents' professional and demographic characteristics.¹³ All currently enrolled program participants were invited by e-mail to take the evaluation survey. Of the 318 individuals contacted, 236 responded to the survey (a 74 percent response rate).

Alumni Online Survey

This survey included 34 questions about the impact of the program on the knowledge, skills, and career paths of respondents as well as their current employment and long-term career goals. E-mail invitations were sent to 83 graduates of master's degree programs, 48 of whom took the survey (a 58 percent response rate). In addition, the evaluation team sent e-mail invitations to 73 completers of the YU certificate programs, 43 of whom took the survey (a 59 percent response rate).

Prospective Student Survey

This survey included 20 questions about interest in an advanced degree or professional development in Jewish education, factors that influence enrollment decisions, and personal characteristics (e.g., years of professional experience in Jewish education and demographic characteristics). The evaluation team sent e-mail invitations to 368 individuals who had inquired about HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU programs but did not apply. Of these prospective students, 126 took the survey (a 34 percent response rate).

Employer Phone Survey

The Employer Phone Survey focused on employers of current and past participants of the certificate and leadership programs supported by the Education Initiative. Employers were asked five questions:

1. How has the program benefited their employees?
2. How has the program benefited their school or organization?
3. Would they recommend the program to additional staff at their school or organization and why?

¹³ Participants of the following programs were surveyed: (1) From HUC-JIR: Executive Master's of Arts (EMA), the joint rabbinical-education program, residential master's programs in New York and Los Angeles, and Certificate in Adolescents and Emerging Adults (CAEA). (2) From JTS: Davidson School's doctoral and master's programs, and Jewish Experiential Leadership Institute (JELI). (3) From YU: Certificate in Differentiated Instruction (DI), Certificate in Educational Technology (ET), Certificate in Experiential Jewish Education (EJE), Certificate in Online/Blended Instruction, and Accelerated Master's Program. (4) The JTS/HUC-JIR Jewish Early Childhood Education Leadership Institute (JECLEI). Appendix A provides a description of the programs supported by the Education Initiative.

4. Would they recommend the program to others outside their organization and why?
5. In what ways would they support the participation of staff in the program (e.g., through tuition reimbursement, paid time off for travel and study, opportunities to try out the new practices)?

The evaluation team requested the permission of 136 individuals (93 current program participants and 43 past participants) to contact their employers. Eighty-three participants consented to the employer survey. Most of those who did not consent indicated that they were the most senior people in their workplace (e.g., they were the rabbis, school heads, or executive directors of their schools or organizations); therefore, there were no employers or supervisors. Sixty-nine employers completed the survey (a 51 percent response rate). The employers interviewed were JCC executive directors and assistant executive directors; JCC chief program officers and chief operating officers; heads of schools, assistant principals, and deans of faculty at Jewish day schools; senior rabbis and executive directors at congregational schools; camp directors; and directors at national associations (e.g., North American Federation of Temple Youth [NFTY] and B'nai Brith Youth Organization [BBYO]).

Administrator Interviews

Interviews with presidents, deans, project coordinators of Education Initiative-funded programs, and additional program staff members from HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU were conducted from February 2012 through April 2013. These semistructured, one-hour interviews focused on the successes and challenges encountered as grantees attempted to meet the five goals of the initiative.

Administrative Records

HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU provided administrative records for students who received financial assistance through the Education Initiative. These records included 42 variables, such as gender, preprogram state of residence, enrollment status, reasons for leaving the program (if applicable), program start date, expected and actual graduation dates, preprogram and current employment, practicum placement information (if applicable), and employment after graduation.

Faculty Survey

This survey included 17 questions about faculty members' interest in the eLearning Faculty Fellowship and Open Collaborative professional development sessions (learning opportunities open to all faculty members). The survey also asked about perceived technology knowledge and skills and attitudes towards collaboration. The evaluation team sent e-mail invitations to 216 faculty members whose e-mails were provided by their respective institutions. Eighty-eight faculty members completed the survey. The number of survey completers from HUC-JIR, YU, and JTS, respectively, was 37, 29, and 22. The response rate by institution was 63, 28, and 58 percent, respectively.



Organization of the Year 2 Evaluation Findings

The first part of this report, “Educator Preparation and Support,” summarizes findings based on survey and interview data pertaining to effective participant recruitment and retention strategies. This section also discusses the perceived impact of the program on participants’ professional growth and contribution to their schools and organizations as well as on alumni reports of their career paths since they completed their programs. The second part, “Capacity Building,” reports on grantees’ activities associated with the long-term financial sustainability of their programs. In addition, this part of the report describes the various inter-institutional collaboration activities that are in progress.

Part A. Educator Preparation and Support

GOAL 1. Increase the number of highly qualified individuals who enroll in preservice and inservice Jewish education programs.

Most of the programs supported by the Education Initiative met their enrollment goals; however, they drew new students from a limited pool of applications. HUC-JIR reported a decline in the number of inquiries from 2011 to 2012 for all programs except the Executive Master’s program. In addition, HUC-JIR reported a decline in the number of applications from 2011 to 2012 in all programs except the Master’s of Arts in Jewish Education program. The ratio of applications to program seats was, on average, less than 2:1. For example, for the Certificate in Adolescents and Emerging Adults, which has an enrollment goal of 16 seats, 19 applications were submitted; for the Executive Master’s program, which has an enrollment goal of 12 seats, 20 applications were submitted.¹⁴

JTS reported an increase both in number of inquiries and applications. However, the number of applications remained low, with a ratio of 2:1 applications per seat. The Experiential Learning Initiative track of the JTS master’s program, which has an enrollment goal of 11 seats, received 18 applications in 2012.

YU reported that from 2011 to 2012, the number of inquiries generally stayed the same, with the exception of the Certificate in Experiential Jewish Education, which saw an increase in the number of inquiries. The number of applications also remained the same except for the certificate programs in Differentiated Instruction and Educational Technology, which had decreases in the number of applications. The Certificate Program in Differentiated Instruction received only 19 applications—lower than its enrollment goal of 24 seats. The Certificate in Experiential Jewish Education stood out as the program with the highest ratio of applications per program seat (3:1). This program, which has an enrollment goal of 20 seats, received 54 applications.

¹⁴ These 20 applicants are part of a larger group of 30 individuals who took a preprogram course as part of a prescreening process.

A low number of applications creates several challenges in terms of program quality and financial sustainability because it: (a) reduces an institution's ability to ensure a high quality of cohort members, as applicants vary in the extent to which they are a good match to the programs and not all those who are accepted agree to enroll; (b) puts institutions at risk of spending full program operation costs on small cohorts; and (c) reduces an institution's ability to negotiate tuition discounts with applicants.

All grantees reported that they continuously explore three main themes that affect student recruitment and retention as follows:

- I. Program design**—the extent to which programs offer structure and content that are attractive to and meet the needs of targeted audiences.
- II. Recruitment**—outreach activities that inform different target audiences about the programs available to them.
- III. Retention**—the extent to which programs have a learning environment conducive to retaining program participants.

This section summarizes data obtained through surveys with current and prospective students and interviews with the grantees for each of the three themes listed above. Exhibit 2 presents participants' ratings of the influences of the following factors on their enrollment decisions.

I. Program design

1. Connecting with other professionals in the field

Participants viewed connections with other professionals as an important professional development opportunity. Survey data showed that the most highly ranked factor that influenced individuals' decisions to enroll was the opportunity to connect with other professionals in the field. Participants valued the opportunity to share practices and ideas with a diverse group of Jewish educators, and indicated that they looked for diversity in terms of geography, educational philosophies, denomination, professional experience, and roles ("from rabbis to classroom teachers to youth group professionals"). Participants felt that, as part of their current or previous job, they had not received enough exposure to Jewish education professionals outside of their school or organization, which limited the scope of information and resources they could tap into. The Executive Master's program at HUC-JIR is an example of a program that integrates networking into the core of the program design. The program encourages participants to develop collegial relationships to support each other, enrich each other with new ideas, and critique each other when appropriate.

2. Institution reputation

Participants noted that it was important to them to receive degrees or certificates that are associated with a brand name. Institution reputation was the second most influential factor at the time of enrollment. Institution reputation was a differentiating factor between individuals who enrolled and those who inquired about the program

but did not enroll. For those who did not enroll, the reputation of the institutions was one of the least influential factors, whereas the other factors (e.g., financial assistance, distance learning) were quite influential.

3. Financial assistance

The third most important factor influencing enrollment was financial assistance. Participants were concerned about balancing family, job, and academic responsibilities. In addition, participants conveyed concerns about the lack of certainty that they will find jobs that will provide a strong return on their graduate studies or certificate program investment. Therefore, they were willing to pay only part of the current tuition value of their program. For further details on participants' attitudes towards program tuition, see the section under Goal 4.

4. Distance learning

Distance learning made programs accessible to a diverse population of educators and education leaders. When asked about reasons for enrolling in their program, participants of the YU online certificate programs assigned highest rank of importance to the ability to learn online and the reputation of the institution. The importance of distance learning is a known preference among students who are older, work full time, and have families (Pontes, Hasit, Pontes, Lewis, & Siefing, 2010).¹⁵ According to their employers, these participants studied mostly on their own time after business hours. The asynchronous (i.e., no set class time) nature of the courses provided students with access to professional development opportunities that they did not have before because they could not commit to traveling or taking time off from their jobs. Distance learning also attracted a substantial number of geographically remote students. At least 40 percent of the program participants supported by the Education Initiative resided in the Southeast, Southwest, and Midwest regions of the country.

In interviews, grantees indicated that they would like to sustain and expand distance learning programs, as part of both master's programs and certificate programs. Less than 10 percent of JTS master's program participants pursued their master's degree mostly through distance learning.¹⁶ Yet, the Davidson School at JTS is exploring ways to increase enrollment of distance learning students as well as the number of courses offered online. YU's Azrieli School recently announced the addition of an online program leading to a master's degree in Jewish education, Azrieli Online, which targets both American and international students. According to Dr. Michael Zeldin, Senior National Director of the schools of education at HUC-JIR, the current vision for the schools of education is to sustain the new blended programs (face-to-face seminars supplemented by online learning) to appeal to a diverse population of prospective students. One of the Executive Master's program participants commented, "I think long-distance programs may be the key

¹⁵ It is estimated that 40 percent of the participants are younger than 30, 27 percent are 31–40 years old, 21 percent are 41–50 years old, and 11 percent are at least 51 years old.

¹⁶ The school's requirement is for students to take at least four courses on campus.

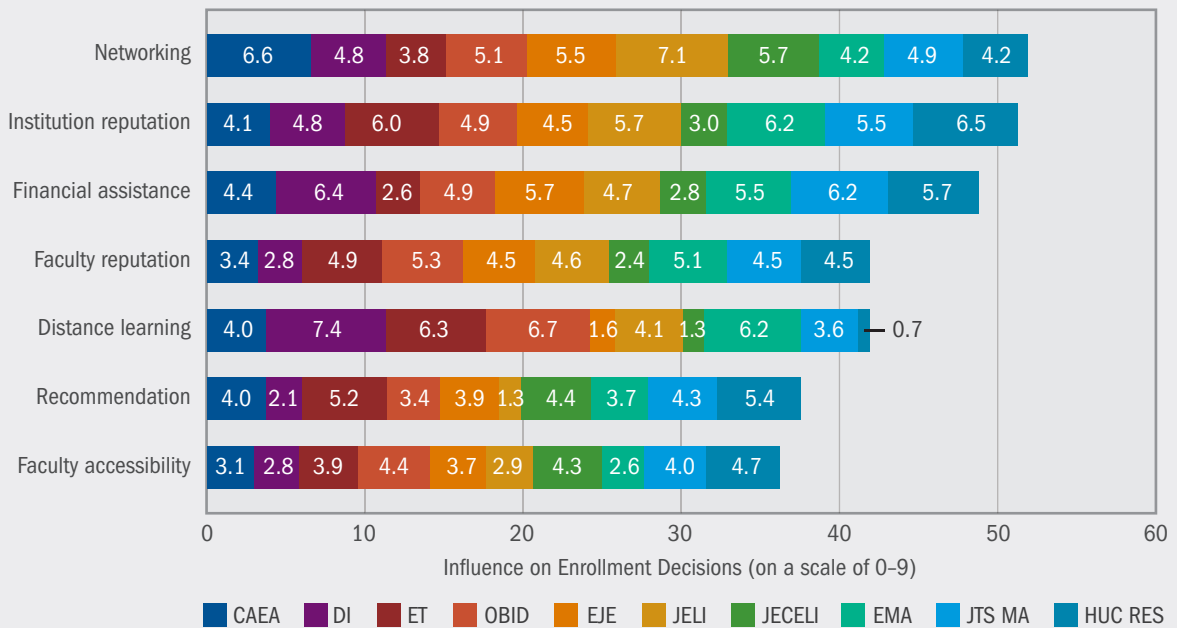
to the future. I am not sure how you reach out to students to have them participate in residential [master's] programs. In my case, a residential program would not have been possible.”

5. Modularization

Some of the programs developed under the Education Initiative employed a modular approach, which attracted individuals who were looking for short-term professional development opportunities. Participants of certificate programs noted that they were looking for high-quality professional learning opportunities from institutions with a strong reputation without the commitment to a long-term or intensive schedule. As one participant explained, “The certification was a great choice for me to make because I wasn’t worried about diving into a two or three yearlong master’s program in which I would essentially have to stop working. I was able to grow intellectually in the program while simultaneously being able to grow as a leader in the Jewish community by using what I learned from my classes.” Another participant noted, “I think the move to create certificate programs is excellent because it allows people to continue working and gain higher education without taking 3 years to do that. The people I’ve talked to in those programs love it so far!”

YU saw substantial potential in the modular approach. For example, the YU Institute for University-School Partnership recently launched its online quick (two- to four-week) professional development modules in which educators can choose from a catalog of topics in Jewish education. They can select the topics most relevant to their interests and work, and accumulate credits by taking these online modules towards certification. Individuals who have completed the HUC-JIR’s Certificate in Adolescence and Emerging Adults (CAEA) may petition to have courses from the program approved as credit towards meeting the requirements of the residential master’s program. YU also is exploring the idea of customizing online professional development modules by the experience and roles of targeted audiences (e.g., middle managers, senior managers, and new professionals) based on recruitment information showing that prospective students already self-select themselves into programs based on assumptions of the types of jobs for which they are most relevant.

Exhibit 2. Participants' Ratings of the Influence of Different Factors on Their Enrollment Decisions



Notes: CAEA: Certificate in Adolescents and Emerging Adults (HUC-JIR); DI: Certificate in Differentiated Instruction (YU); ET: Certificate in Educational Technology (YU); OBID: Certificate in Online/Blended Instruction and Design (YU); EJE: Certificate in Experiential Jewish Education (YU); JELI: Jewish Experiential Learning Institute (JTS); JECALI: Jewish Early Childhood Education Learning Institute (HUC-JIR /JTS); EMA: Executive Master's Program (HUC-JIR); JTS MA: Master's in Jewish Education (JTS); HUC RES: Residential Master's programs (HUC-JIR).

Ranking by participants was converted into a continuous variable using the Borda Count method (Saari, 1985) and averaged for each program.

II. Recruitment

1. Aligning messaging with prospective students' career aspirations

Recruitment efforts need to be aligned with the career aspirations of prospective students. Evaluation data show that, for many of the graduate students, enrolling in the program was an important career move with the expectation that it would help them advance to a leadership role. Participants of advanced degree programs came with several years of experience in the field, which may be one of the indicators of readiness to take a leadership role. For example, the average length of professional experience working at complementary schools (e.g., congregational schools, Jewish youth programs, Jewish education tutoring services, and Hebrew schools) was 10, 8, and 6 years, respectively, for JTS' doctoral, HUC-JIR's residential master's, and JTS' master's programs. Many of these participants had additional experience working in a variety of other settings, including day schools, residential and day camps, early childhood education programs, and programs for young adults in higher education. Survey data showed that two thirds of the participants (68 percent) plan to find a new position or seek a promotion after graduation. Before starting their program, few of HUC-JIR residential master's (8 percent) and JTS master's students (13 percent) were in leadership positions compared with 82 percent and 51 percent, respectively, of these respondents who expected to be in leadership positions after completing their programs.

Participants of the programs supported by the Education Initiative aspire to become leaders in the field of Jewish education.

When asked about their long-term career goals, one fourth (25 percent) of the JTS and HUC-JIR participants indicated that they wanted to create or enhance education programming for their congregations. Other respondents aspired to secure an executive position in a nonprofit organization (18 percent), support supplementary Jewish education as directors or school heads (12 percent), or become education consultants (11 percent). Additional aspirations included advancing to a management position in a camp setting (9 percent), supporting K–12 formal Jewish education as a director or school head (8 percent), and starting their own business or education program (7 percent). As expected, only 5 percent of the respondents imagined a long-term career as a classroom teacher. Understanding available career options and their impact on employability may be an important factor in encouraging bachelor’s degree recipients to continue their education. Knowing the career opportunities and long-term benefits that come from obtaining a graduate degree is the first step in ensuring that potential graduate students have the information they need to weigh the opportunity costs against the career benefits of obtaining an advanced degree (Wendler et al., 2012).

Employers said that they would recommend the programs because they would like their staff to increase their commitment to their jobs and consider long-term careers in Jewish education. Some of the employers were concerned with high staff turnover rates and believed that the programs offered by HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU could professionalize the field; add more credibility to the work of their staff; help staff explore their expertise through their work; and promote network connections with other professionals in the field. They felt that all of these factors may persuade their staff to stay longer in their current workplace before seeking advanced degrees or other jobs.

Employers noted that the certificate and leadership programs provided an opportunity for women in their organizations to become more actively involved in leadership roles. This finding corresponds to the large representation of women across all of the programs supported by the Education Initiative. It is estimated that about 74 percent of current participants are female. Similarly, it is estimated that 71 percent of the individuals who inquired but did not enroll are female.

2. Developing messaging about gaps in educator and leader training and the unique value of the programs

Participants in master’s programs and leadership institutes wanted to know how their programs differed from other leadership training programs. The message that the programs at HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU combine leadership training and knowledge about Judaism was a powerful concept for participants. A JTS master’s student commented, “One thing the [Davidson] school needs to brag about is what they can offer. The Davidson School has something that some of the other programs don’t. Education and Judaic studies aren’t separated; they are integrated. That’s what spoke to me and I think it might speak to others.” In addition, participants recommended that recruiters explain the relevance of programs to the work and career aspirations of prospective students, and show how much of an impact trained professionals in the field can make in their own lives and the lives of others.

Both participants and employers alluded to the relative lack of higher quality professional development opportunities that they could offer their staff. Participants felt that the certificate and leadership programs filled a void in the field in terms of opportunities for professional development. A few of them noted that they had never formally studied Jewish education and that their programs provided knowledge of theories and methodologies to which they had not been previously exposed. In the words of one of the participants:

Until this program, it was essentially up to me to be an Experiential Educator—something I was never trained in. I had no access to anything like this, mostly because it didn't exist. My organization tries every year to create training like this but, in my opinion, fails regularly. This program validates what I do on a large level and also exposes me to many different tools, knowledge and skills I had no access to before.

Although certificate program participants working in informal education settings tended to have worked in Jewish education settings prior to program enrollment, many of them added a note in their surveys that they had never received formal training in Jewish education; therefore, this was a valuable experience for them. Participants noted the value of courses that focused on specific education skills and their exposure to a cross-section of Jewish educators (e.g., day school teachers, pulpit rabbis, B'nai Brith Youth Organization [BBYO] directors) as well as access to professional mentors. One participant described:

It has provided me with a better overall understanding of Jewish values and principles as they relate to my daily work. This is most important in my supervisory and decision-making responsibilities. It has also allowed me to increase my network of JCC [Jewish Community Center] professionals that I can refer to for thoughts, input, insights, etc... Lastly, it has exposed me to great Jewish educators that were never part of my formal education, as I do not come from a Jewish educational background and have had very little Jewish educational experience.

Employers expressed a desire to support their staff's professional growth but, at the same time, they did not know how to turn this desire into action. They felt that the structure and networking opportunities presented by the programs were invaluable professional experiences for their employees. A JCC director said:

I think it's hard, sometimes, to give employees opportunity for growth and I think with this type of program it really gives them an opportunity to connect with professionals at their level or maybe even about their level from other JCCs in an environment where they can inspire each other, and that can only feed back to the JCC they come to.

A third employer said:

"I think that it's good to be in an organized, inspiring program. They really get sparked by the ideas of the other people; there's a lot of cross-pollination. A lot of times, we never really leave our own synagogue, so we might get stuff we don't experience—other perspectives and points of view.

3. Making recruitment a process rather than a one-time event

Participants recommended that recruiters provide a “taste of the program” to prospective students. Participants felt that providing such an introduction could be both informational and support relationship building with prospective students. Participants suggested an array of activities, including working with Hillels and other Jewish organizations on college campuses by providing weekend study or experiential retreats, inviting college students for special retreats or Shabbatonim, providing a venue for students to engage in “internships” with a professor of education, and assigning mentors to college students working with congregational schools. An HUC-JIR master’s student reported, “I took courses last year before applying to matriculate. It was a very persuasive experience. It really made me want more.”

Prospective students who did not apply knew little or nothing at all about key aspects of the programs. Nearly two thirds (63 percent) of the individuals who inquired but did not apply knew little or nothing about faculty accessibility and willingness to interact with students. In addition, about one half of these individuals knew little or nothing about the pedagogical content and skills covered, and the time commitment and scheduling requirements of the programs they were interested in (56 percent and 50 percent, respectively). It should be noted that many of the prospective students surveyed may still be a potential market for the grantees’ programs. Most of the individuals (83 percent) who inquired at HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU and did not submit an application did not apply elsewhere. Less than one half (40 percent) of these individuals reported that they were interested in a master’s or certificate program, and most of this overall group of inquiring individuals knew which HUC-JIR, JTS, or YU program they were interested in. Studies in higher education have documented the important role that information has in recruitment efforts. For example, Laughlin and Kostelnik (2002) reported that the most successful recruitment strategy they used in recruiting prospective students to a distance learning master’s program in the human sciences included a broad set of information as follows:

Prospective students are more willing to enroll in courses when they see the full set of requirements needed to obtain the degree. They can determine which courses will be offered during future time blocks and how those schedules meld with their personal, work, or family schedules. (p. 5)

Most of the certificate and leadership program participants enrolled following encouragement from their employers and colleagues. The majority of the certificate and leadership program participants can be divided into three groups based on their sources of information about the Education Initiative programs: employers and supervisors (54 percent), colleagues (23 percent), and e-mail distribution lists of professional associations (18 percent). Their employers indicated a high willingness to continue to recommend these programs to their staff (85 percent) and other professionals outside their organization (88 percent). Employers conveyed that they would recommend the programs only to those employees who are in a role at their workplace that would benefit from the program and who can handle studying while working full time.

Graduate students who eventually did enroll were often in communication with alumni and representatives of the grantees. Survey data identified two main influences on the decision to enroll: More than one third (38 percent) of the participants decided to enroll after discussing the program with alumni; an additional one third (33 percent) was influenced by direct communications with faculty, administrators, and admissions office representatives.

Participants indicated a willingness to recommend the program to others and to participate in recruitment efforts. Nearly all (98 percent) of the participants said that they have and will recommend the programs to others. Most of the alumni (72 percent) plan to stay in touch with their faculty, staff, mentors, or advisors throughout the year. These data suggest that there is promise in tapping alumni as advocates and connected professionals to raise awareness of the available programs. Program participants also indicated that they recommended programs only to those whose interests and ability to take on learning commitments seemed to match the programs' scope and requirements. This finding may explain the relatively high yield of applicants who were referred to the programs by alumni.

III. Retention

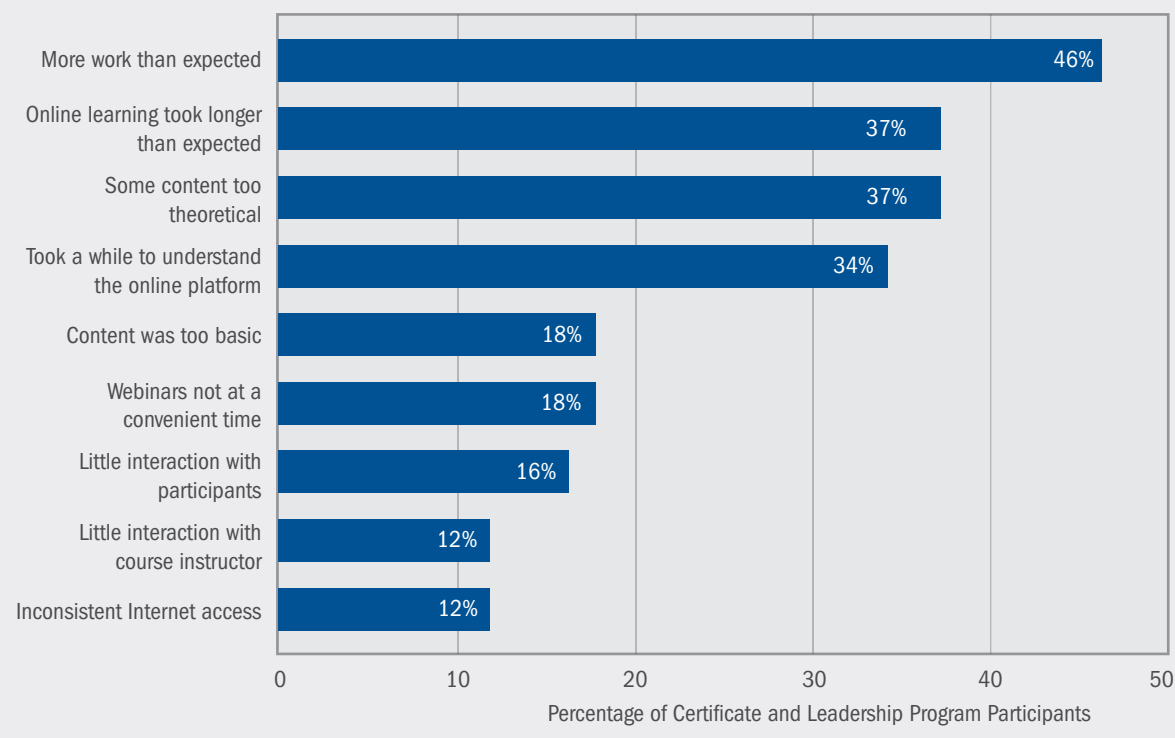
The investment in program design and student recruitment calls for maximizing student retention. The programs supported by the Education Initiative aim to provide the highest quality, most rigorous learning experiences to selected qualified individuals. Needless to say, losing students during the course of the programs reduces program impact, potential program revenues, and number of alumni who are important advocates of the programs. Since the inception of the Education Initiative, more than 60 individuals have left their programs. Student attrition was particularly high for YU's Certificate Program in Educational Technology (32 percent of the total dropouts across programs). Other programs with high attrition included YU's Differentiated Instruction (26 percent of all dropouts) and Experiential Jewish Education (12 percent) certificates, as well as JTS' master's (18 percent) and doctoral (4 percent) programs. Male and female students are equally likely to drop out of their programs. Within the cohorts currently enrolled in the programs, 50 participants reported that they had considered dropping out. With the exception of the Jewish Early Childhood Education Institute (JECERI) and the Jewish Experiential Leadership Institute (JELI), every program had participants who considered dropping out.

Student retention in graduate programs is an ongoing and vexing problem across all types of higher institutions (i.e., private and public universities) in the nation (ACT, 2012). In addition, data collected by the U.S. Department of Education reveal that more than one half of the students enrolled in online degree programs are likely to drop out, especially if they are part-time students (Burnsed, 2010).

There is no single reason for dropping out of programs. Data suggest that many enrollees left the programs because they felt that they did not have the time to meet program requirements. Survey data of current participants of the advanced degree programs who recently considered dropping out of their programs suggest there are a variety of reasons for leaving the programs. The most common reasons were finding

the program requirements too demanding for working professionals (21 percent), considering professional opportunities that might have prevented them from continuing their studies (5 percent), personal events that conflicted with the program (5 percent), and disappointment with the program (5 percent). Data collected from certificate and leadership programs participants demonstrate a variety of challenges for participants (Exhibit 3). Here too, the most common challenge was time. As one participant described, “Sometimes I felt that I was overloaded with regular school preparation and the course work came week after week, and I sometimes felt that I was falling behind.” Other challenges suggested difficulties in navigating the online learning management system, expectations for greater relevance to everyday work, and desire for more communications.

Exhibit 3. Course Challenges Noted by Certificate and Leadership Program Participants

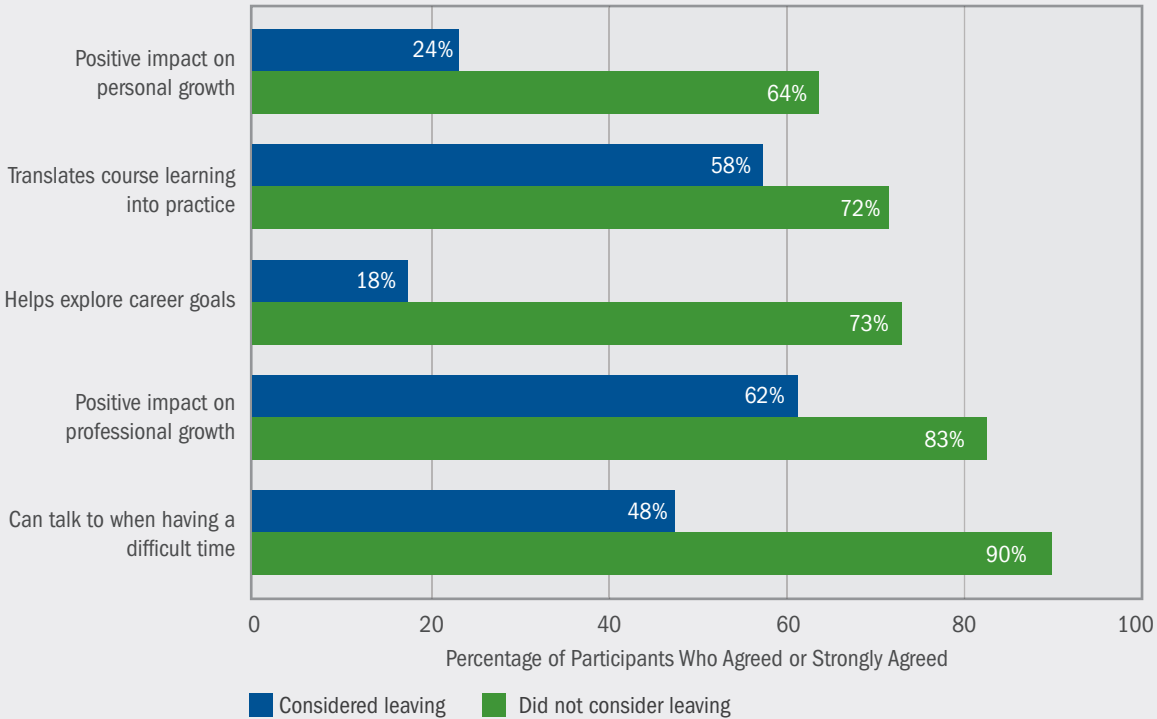


There is no single type of support that can promote student retention. When asked what helped them overcome impediments to program participation, participants provided a wide range of answers. Many simply stated that having this learning opportunity and obtaining the certificate or degree was important to them (16 percent of respondents). Others indicated that they stayed due to the encouragement and support of friends and family (10 percent), faculty members and academic advisors (5 percent), and members of their cohort (1 percent).

The quality of mentoring may be associated with student retention. We compared the mentoring experience of 17 JTS master’s and HUC residential master’s students who reported that they have considered leaving their program with the 52 members of their cohorts who responded to these survey questions. Data showed that individuals who considered dropping out were less likely to have met with their mentors at the time of the survey (65 percent met with their mentor compared with 77 percent of their peers

who had not considered dropping out). Those who did meet with their mentors but still considered dropping out were less likely to agree or strongly agree that their mentors helped them in the following ways, as shown in Exhibit 4. This finding suggests the potential value of identifying those at risk of dropping out and providing additional individualized support by a mentor or faculty member. Mentoring has been found to be a successful student retention strategy, both in traditional master’s programs (Pearson, 2012) and in online programs (Truluck, 2007).

Exhibit 4. Participants’ Reports on Mentors’ Impact



GOAL 2. Provide programs that prepare educators and education leaders to teach, inspire, and enrich education experiences in a variety of settings.

The majority of participants in programs supported by the Education Initiative aspire to become Jewish education leaders. Leadership requires more than evidence of acquiring knowledge. High-quality programs should help future leaders find and grow their inspiration, motivation, and commitment (Brown, 2005). Moreover, these programs should strengthen aspiring leaders’ ability to perform as strategic thinkers, instructional leaders, and visionaries committed to continuous improvement (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007; The Wallace Foundation, 2012a, 2012b). Highly theoretical programs or those that are unrelated to the daily demands of contemporary education leaders are likely to have limited success. Qualitative analysis of survey data revealed the following five major themes that can support the role of the education leader as described above. For each of these themes, the programs supported by the Education Initiative demonstrated positive outcomes, both in terms of participants’ growth and affecting Jewish education programming in a variety of settings.

I. Promoting a common language and articulation of goals

Participants acquired a greater ability to define and articulate goals for their programs and schools.

Identifying a vision begins with a deeper understanding of one's role as an education leader. One participant said, "I have developed a sustainable articulation of values that enables me to serve consistently as a leader of integrity who demonstrates Jewish values in practice as well as theory." Participants indicated that developing a set of values for their schools and camps created the foundation that would shape staffing decisions, professional development plans, and evaluation of current services. At times, setting goals involved making tough decisions when the budget was limited or there were staffing constraints. Participants felt that the programs gave them the tools to make the right decisions. Participants also brought back to their schools a vocabulary for describing and articulating values and goals. They felt that their programs brought "the professional vernacular to us in a field that is sometimes seen as semiprofessional." One participant commented, "This has offered me the opportunity to develop language and further understanding of what I do every day for a living. The HUC program has provided me with the knowledge to do even more with my B'nai Brith Youth Organization (BBYO) teens."

Employers conveyed the same sentiments. One employer, reflecting on the benefits to students, said of an employee, "This [program] has allowed him to gain a more sophisticated language in theory behind what he does, and so it causes him to think differently about the way he engages with lay leaders." Employers also agreed that their employees have stepped up and have taken more active roles in helping to shape education programming decision making. The added value emphasized the most by employers was innovation both in organizational management and instruction. As one employer commented, there was a program participant who reminded us that "we need to be looking at things differently. For example, we were planning our annual leadership retreat, and instead of doing it the same old way, she was constantly bringing ideas to the table based on the experience she had in her group."

II. Building professional self-esteem

Participants gained a better understanding of the significance of their work.

Participants indicated that they saw their work in a different light and felt the need to share that perspective with other professionals. As one participant indicated, "I believe that if everyone understood youth workers' roles as educators, it would absolutely revolutionize the field." Some of the participants felt that they could communicate in more depth with stakeholders and other partner organizations about what their school or organization does and about how partnerships with other organizations could be successful. Participants' reported that they improved their ability to articulate educational philosophies and identify and frame opportunities for action. These improved abilities gave them confidence in communicating with community leaders. This knowledge also enabled participants to take action at their schools and programs and to initiate ongoing conversations with other professionals (e.g., forming a network of JCC professionals and experts in Jewish experiential education). One participant indicated, "I became increasingly more confident to accept new challenges within my job." Participants also formed social connections with members of their program

cohort. These connections provided them with support networks. One participant indicated developing “a good network of people to contact when I feel that I need to speak to someone about a situation or if I have a question on how to handle a situation that may arise.”

III. Building capacity in schools and organizations

The programs supported by the Education Initiative enabled participants to promote professional learning communities at their schools and organizations. Some of the schools set aside regular time for employees to present about their new knowledge. Employers reported that the programs motivated their employees to model new practices to colleagues and engage in conversations about pedagogical concepts. Consequently, their colleagues used a shared vocabulary and were able to discuss the application of the knowledge learned to their daily work. Employers observed that having lead teachers and directors receive the education supported by the Education Initiative raised the bar in terms of expectations of staff knowledge and what training their staff members should receive. One employer commented that what his employee learned in the program “informed his judgments and ability to create the kind of learning and training experiences for staff that a number of people, including rabbis, said were fantastic and different, helpful, informational, and the kind of training they didn’t get previously.” Survey data show that about 94 percent of the certificate and leadership program participants have become better able to provide training to other professionals. About 77 percent of the employers of the participants in those programs encouraged participants to train staff members using the knowledge they had gained.

Program participants shared the new instructional techniques with colleagues. One school head commented on the change in an employee following program participation: “She has really taken a lead in teaching other teachers some of the things she is doing. She spreads the word and when she gets excited about something, she really spreads the excitement as well. ” Another school head commented, “I am hoping that the model he’s setting in his class is one that other teachers will want to emulate.” Survey data show that 80 percent of the program participants have seen an impact on their colleagues as a result of the knowledge they have shared with them.

The greater expertise of employees enabled some organizations to expand their services in Jewish education. The two YU certificate programs that involve use of technology (i.e., the Certificate in Educational Technology and the Certificate in Online/ Blended Instruction and Design) provided participants with the knowledge to design new projects in day schools. School heads felt that their staff members’ new skills “really energized and had given a whole new look to teaching.” The teachers agreed with this observation. One of them noted, “It has opened a whole new world of 21st century teaching. I have totally revamped a very dry middle school world history course. I have looked for various ways to include technology in all of my classes.” About 98 percent of the certificate and leadership program participants reported that the program expanded their knowledge of effective instructional practices.

Distance learning participants of the JTS master's programs also were able to change their instruction concurrently while enrolled in the program. About 75 percent of these participants had already used their new knowledge at their schools or internship places.

One participant commented:

I consider the things I teach in a very different way today than I did when I first began the program. The course on curriculum development helped me understand the concept of using a "big idea" as the basis for a unit and designing specific activities that pertain to that idea. I see that, so far, most of the students in this class are very engaged and have been enthusiastic about many of the activities that constitute this curriculum. I would not have been able to organize the activities around a theme were it not for the course that I took.

Participants of the HUC-JIR Master's of Jewish Education for rabbinical and cantorial students felt that the program added an important skill set to their rabbinical studies. One participant remarked:

Simply being an ordained member of the clergy does not automatically bestow knowledge of how to educate. This program is important because it ensures the creation of a group of professionals in Jewish society with the pedagogical knowledge to make sure that the wisdom and traditions of Judaism are carried forward to the next generation.

IV. Improving instruction and programming

Program participants identified new ways to improve instruction, modeled new instructional practices, and created and refined curricula. An important stepping stone in making an impact is developing awareness of instructional possibilities. Participants felt that their programs opened their eyes to some of the many tools and techniques available to educators. This motivated them to implement innovative strategies in their classrooms. Almost every certificate program participant (97 percent) whose work includes teaching reported that they have become more effective educators as a result of their program. According to two participants:

I'm taking on a larger role in the experiential educational programming in my school. I've taken on two formal new roles at my school, Director of Tefillah Programming and Israel Education. I have received feedback that my programming has been more intentional and meaningful than my predecessor's, and I believe this is largely a result of this program. In addition, I feel like my in-class instruction has become SIGNIFICANTLY more hands on than ever before. I am engaged in project-based learning with my students and using technology, art, and facilitation techniques that I have directly acquired from this program. I am gaining a reputation for being a strong experiential educator and am being sought out to take on an administrative role at a nearby Jewish day school.

Here are a few things that have changed since I started this program: (1) My executive director has given me a role in my organization's strategic planning process, (2) I am teaching some of what I learned to leading professionals in my field through a webinar next week, and (3) I am in conversations about teaching some of what I'm learning at our national conference this summer.

Program participants created new programs and initiatives. Most program participants (98 percent) reported that they have been inspired by their programs to create new programs or initiatives in their workplaces. Data also indicated that 92 percent of the employers of participants in these programs permitted participants to try out new initiatives at their schools or organizations based on what they have learned. In schools in which there was an existing plan to create new courses or revise instruction, the impact was enhanced by schools' readiness to use new technologies and techniques. One employer described that, as a result of having staff members trained in one of the Education Initiative programs, "the Federation brought us into their program and was very excited that we can create a dynamic for their group in addition to the stuff we normally do."

V. Placing Israel education on the agenda of schools and congregations

HUC-JIR and JTS aimed to impact Israel education through educator preparation programs.

According to the Dean of the JTS' Davidson School of Education, Dr. Barry Holtz, the issue of Israel education right now is a very high priority in the American Jewish community. Even though there may not be jobs with the specific title of "Israel educator," a wide range of educators (e.g., school directors, camp counselors, and JCC staff) are expected to develop Israel engagement and education. Because of the paucity of professional development about Israel education, the Davidson School believes that its Israel programs as part of the master's program enhanced the portfolio that graduates could bring with them into the job market. The Israel education programming aims not only to equip participants with the necessary knowledge and skills, but also increase their awareness of the importance of Israel education.

Survey data showed that at the time of enrollment, when participants examined program characteristics to decide on the attractiveness of the program to them, they assigned the least importance to gaining knowledge about Israel and studying in Israel. Following their experience visiting Israel and learning about complex issues in Israel education, 69 percent of HUC-JIR respondents and 82 percent of JTS respondents felt more motivated to pursue Israel education work within the Jewish community after their learning in Israel.¹⁷ Survey data also showed that 94 percent and 82 percent, respectively, of HUC-JIR and JTS participants felt more prepared to talk about Israel with people in their community. In addition, all HUC-JIR respondents (100 percent) and 82 percent of JTS respondents thought that they were better able to create Israel-related learning experiences for learners of all ages.

¹⁷ Data for JTS are available only for the Visions and Voices program. The Keshet Hadash program included 10 participants. Because not all participants completed the survey, survey responses are not reported here to protect participants' identity.

GOAL 3. Increase the number of educators and education leaders placed, retained, and promoted in a variety of settings.

A master's degree in Jewish education enabled graduates to find jobs in leadership positions and to improve their salaries. Survey data indicated that all recent alumni of the HUC-JIR residential master's programs who sought jobs found job placements. Most of the job placements (61 percent) were in leadership roles (e.g., director of congregational schools, director of community planning) and the remaining placements were in teaching positions (i.e., day school teachers, informal educators). Data from a survey of 20 JTS master's alumni showed that—with the exception of one graduate who was searching for a job at the time of the survey and another respondent who reported finding a job outside the education world—all those who sought a job in Jewish education were able to find one. All job placements were in leadership roles (e.g., associate director of religious schools, Jewish and student life programming coordinator, assistant director of education in a congregational school, and youth community director).

HUC-JIR and JTS alumni reported that their master's degree in Jewish education gave them an advantage over other job candidates. HUC-JIR alumni felt that their master's degree opened doors for jobs that otherwise may have not been available to them. Alumni who were placed as rabbi-educators noted that as a first position out of school, they would not have received those career opportunities without their degree in Jewish education. Alumni also felt well prepared for their new jobs. One of the alumni noted, "Certainly, the program likely opened new professional opportunities in Jewish education. However, the program also strengthened my ability to meet the needs of any professional role." A JTS graduate commented, "I think that the program opened many more doors and allowed me to stand out as someone with not only a higher education in the field of Jewish education, but also hands-on training and mentoring. When I was going through interviews, organizations wanted to see someone with an advanced degree." Another graduate noted, "There is brand-name recognition of JTS and Davidson that is very helpful in the field." Rabbis and cantors also described having an advantage over other job candidates because of their degree in Jewish education. A rabbi noted, "I think the skills I learned in Davidson were more foundational to the development and definition of my rabbinate than my years in rabbinical school."

Networking played an important role in job searches. Alumni used a mix of strategies in their job search. They reported that the most successful strategies were through personal connections of family and friends (59 percent), connections made during their Jewish education (52 percent), and connections from an association they were affiliated with (38 percent).

Participants in the certificate and leadership programs felt that their programs increased their market value. Participants believed that the programs lead education institutions to consider them for positions that otherwise would not have been within their reach.

As a YU certificate program participant described:

This program has transformed my professional life. It is not a coincidence that I was offered a dream position in San Francisco immediately after the first module of the program. I believe that the degree of professionalism and intentionality that I showed in my interview process and in my lectures were a deep reflection of what I have gained from the YU program.

Each of the grantees developed programs to support the transition into the workplace; however, each program targeted a different subgroup of new professionals. The JTS Experiential Learning Initiative track offered career sessions for students to improve personal marketing and begin to develop networking and job search skills. Placement services included individual meetings with job seekers, resume reviews, preparing for a model lesson, and strategies for interviewing and negotiating salaries. YU cultivated relationships with potential employers by reaching out to them monthly and helping to match alumni to job openings. HUC-JIR developed the New Educators Transition Boot Camp and Alumni Toolkit for graduates of its residential master's degree programs. YU offered a New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) to schools that applied and demonstrated a sufficient level of readiness to put into place a new teacher support system.

Part B. Capacity Building

Halfway into the Education Initiative, the three grantees have transitioned from focusing on program development to emphasizing strategies for financial sustainability. Financial sustainability is defined here as the ability to maintain financial capacity over time (Bowman, 2011). The long-term goal of financial sustainability is to maintain or expand services within the organization while developing resilience to occasional economic shocks in the short term (e.g., short-term loss of program funds, variability in donations; Sontag-Padilla, Staplefoote, & Gonzalez Morganti, 2012). In order to ensure that the investments of the Education Initiative are not lost after it ends in 2016, grantees need to identify the programs that can be financially sustained as well as strategies that will support financial sustainability. At the same time, grantees are exploring the extent to which inter-institutional collaboration can benefit infrastructure building and program sustainability. This section of the report describes accomplishments and challenges in exploring these issues as they relate to two goals of the Education Initiative: infrastructure development and inter-institutional collaboration.

GOAL 4. Develop the infrastructure that will enable financial sustainability of the programs supported by the Education Initiative.

The small size of programs may hinder their ability to recover operating costs. Many of the programs (both online and face-to-face) are capped at fewer than 25 seats. Although small class size may be responsive to participants' needs and instructors' workloads, it is not cost effective.¹⁸ With the current level of program costs and tuition value, the programs are not large enough to collect tuition revenue sufficient for cost recovery. One YU program has been discontinued due to high operating costs and a second program will be replaced by an online master's program.¹⁹ The ability to expand program cohorts depends on accomplishing increased recruitment target goals. As described under Goal 1 in this report, the low ratio of applications to program seats is a source of uncertainty regarding the potential for expansion of programs.

All programs require ongoing investments in program development. According to Dr. Scott Goldberg, the director of the Institute for University-School Partnership, the market for its online programs will not be satisfied unless programs are constantly updated to reflect current trends in the field of education. Updating these programs requires regularly investing time and energy in rethinking the certificate programs and professional development modules. The initial investment of money for faculty to develop courses will need to be supplemented by additional development expenses every two or three years.

All grantees believe that financial aid will always be available to qualified prospective students. Interviews with grantees indicated that each institution will increase its efforts to determine optimal tuition prices that do not entail a full tuition waiver and, at the same time, will remain attractive to prospective students. Financial aid programs can achieve a range of such enrollment outcomes by encouraging academically talented students to enroll

¹⁸ Cost efficiencies have been achieved in operational costs. For example, some of the programs, such as JECELI and EMA, conducted face-to-face seminars of two cohorts at the same time to save on fixed costs of coordination and supervision.

¹⁹ In the future, YU will offer the option of an accelerated master's track (i.e., achieving a master's degree in one year) to participants of an online master's program.

in college (Curs, 2008; Ehrenberg, Zhang, & Levin, 2006), reducing price barriers for students demonstrating financial need (Ehrenberg, Zhang, & Levin, 2006), encouraging students to persist (Chen & St. John, 2011), and even simply meeting the institution's enrollment capacity (Curs & Singell, 2010; DesJardins & McCall, 2010). However, offering discounts to increase program enrollment can be sustained only to a certain extent. Institutions that aid students from unfunded sources are putting themselves and their programs at risk.

Some of the current participants would have enrolled even if financial assistance had not been offered to them. Twenty-four percent of the certificate and leadership program participants and 50 percent of the advanced degree program participants would have enrolled without financial aid. An additional 13 percent of the participants in each of these two groups of programs would have enrolled at a later time if they had to pay for tuition out of pocket. Certificate, leadership, and master's program participants indicated that they can pay up to about one third of the tuition value (percentages varied by program, from 32 to 42 percent; see Appendix B). In terms of dollar amounts, this translates into \$1,000–\$3,800 per certificate or leadership program participant and \$7,000–\$8,800 per graduate student each year.

One fourth (25 percent) of the employers surveyed were willing to pay at least part of the tuition of their employee's professional development programs. In times of economic uncertainty, many of the employers surveyed were careful about making statements regarding willingness to pay at least part of the professional development tuition of their employees. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that 75 percent of the employers responded "maybe" when asked if they would be willing to pay part of the tuition of their employees in the future. However, none of the employers said that they would be unwilling to cover some tuition costs.

All grantees received interest from donors to help sustain their core programs; however, not all fundraising efforts targeted the support of new programs developed as part of the Education Initiative. YU plans to maintain its commitment to providing financial aid to qualified applicants accepted to the Azrieli School of Education's master's programs. The \$10 million gift from the David Azrieli Foundation will provide scholarship support to advanced degree students, replacing the scholarships funded as part of the Education Initiative. The Education Initiative funding of the YU Center for Jewish Future's Certificate in Experiential Jewish Education and service learning programs is likely to be replaced by more than \$750,000 secured from individual donors, foundations, and organizational partnerships. YU is currently having conversations with major North American and European foundations to provide additional support for the Certificate Program in Experiential Jewish Education. YU's Institute for University-School Partnership's online professional development courses developed as part of the Education Initiative are likely to be sustained through contributions collected through the newly launched "Meah Achuz Campaign," which has the goal of raising \$1 million annually. To date, YU has raised \$200,000 towards this campaign. Additional donations from the Kohelet Foundation, individual donors, federations, and the AVI CHAI Foundation will enable faculty members to continuously review current programs and strategize to sustain the online certificate programs.

HUC-JIR is in the midst of its fundraising campaign titled "Assuring Your Jewish Future." As of April 2013, the campaign had raised \$93.1 million toward its \$125 million goal. Some of these funds will support the Rhea Hirsch School of Education programs in Los Angeles and the School of Education in New York. However, none of these funds will be targeted towards the new programs developed as part of the Education Initiative. Fundraisers at HUC-JIR learned that donors are less certain of the importance of their contributions to these programs, regardless of the success of the programs in reaching their goals.

The JTS Davidson School has also experienced success in overall fundraising efforts. The William Davidson Foundation annual grant has been increased by half a million dollars. The Davidson School also received a gift from the Chair of the Davidson School Advisory Board to enhance the Vision and Voices Israel program and extend it a few more days, deepening the impact of the program. JTS is also in the midst of conversations with an individual donor considering a gift for Davidson scholarships.

However, some level of uncertainty about recently launched programs remains. For example, it is unclear if the joint JTS/HUC-JIR Jewish Early Childhood Education Leadership Institute (JECLEI), the JTS Jewish Experiential Education Leadership Institute (JELI), and the HUC-JIR Executive Master's and Certificate in Adolescents and Emerging Adults (CAEA) programs will be supported by fundraising. Some experts have suggested that tuition is a more reliable source of revenue than fundraising (Capaldi & Abbey, 2011). Echoing this sentiment, the three institutions have begun exploring ways to contain program costs and raise tuition revenue.

GOAL 5. Identify areas of programmatic and inter-institutional collaboration that can improve program quality and make improvements sustainable.

Inter-institutional collaboration may create opportunities for financial sustainability. Through collaboration around common goals, higher education institutions can reduce redundancies in spending and combine their expertise and resources to enhance their ability to achieve qualitatively better outcomes (Bardach, 1998). A growing number of documented successful higher education inter-institutional collaborations have been created to provide high-quality and institutionally sustainable initiatives (e.g., Demers, Mamary, & Ebin, 2011). This section describes three inter-institutional collaboration projects that demonstrate the foundations of effective collaboration. For collaboration to work, the organizations should enter a well-defined relationship with a commitment to a set of common goals, a jointly developed structure and shared responsibility, and mutual authority and accountability (Mattessich, Murray-Close, & Monsey, 2001). As part of the Education Initiative, the grantees have been involved in three types of collaborations: building the field of experiential Jewish education, technology collaboration, and the Jewish Early Childhood Education Leadership Institute. These collaborations are described below.

I. Experiential Jewish education

HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU are in agreement that experiential Jewish education can play an important role in engaging today's Jewish youth and helping them connect to and deepen their Jewish identity. From that perspective, HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU have answered the call to professionalize the experiential field by providing high-quality educator programs. Although each institution is pursuing its own programs, they are learning from each other and together are helping to reinvigorate and redefine experiential Jewish education. Most notably, this year (2013), the coordinators of experiential learning started meeting regularly to discuss the theory and application of experiential education to further develop their understanding of the field.

The Education Initiative enabled the development of several experiential Jewish education programs. YU's Center for the Jewish Future is offering a 12-month

Certificate Program in Experiential Jewish Education for inservice Jewish education professionals with at least five years of experience in the field. The curriculum is divided into four weeklong seminars. Participants learn to incorporate experiential Jewish education skills, tools, knowledge, and traits into their practice. At the end of the program, they present about their experiential education projects from their workplaces to other program participants. This program targets a diverse group of educators and leaders in Jewish education, including directors working in day and supplementary schools; directors, rabbis, and associates from Chabad and Hillel campus centers; and regional directors and associates from youth organizations.

HUC-JIR is offering the *Certificate in Adolescents and Emerging Adults (CAEA)* for professionals working with this specific age group. This nine-month program includes multiple types of learning experiences, including online courses, face-to-face intensives, a 10-day institute, mentorship, and a field-related action project. The program was designed to help support a variety of Jewish education experiences of youth (ages 13–18) and young adults (ages 19–26). It should be noted that experiential education is only one of the topics of CAEA's focus, with other topics consisting of adolescent and emerging adults' development, transformation and organizational dynamics, and Judaic studies.

JTS's *Experiential Learning Initiative (ELI)* is a new concentration in Jewish experiential education as part of the Davidson School master's program. This track includes targeted academic coursework, cohort-based learning, and an intensive field internship as core components of the two-year course of study. The ELI Master's in Jewish Education track at the Davidson School targets not only camp directors but also future directors and principals in Jewish day and supplementary schools. Another program is a partnership between the Davidson School and the JCC Association, the *Jewish Experiential Leadership Institute (JELI)*. This institute is a 15-month program specifically designed for middle- and senior-management professionals in JCCs. This program aims to enhance the personal growth, Jewish leadership abilities, and professional skill sets related to the application of experiential learning. The JELI program includes online learning and face-to-face seminars.

There are more commonalities than differences in HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU program directors' definitions of experiential learning. Interviews with the HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU program coordinators indicated a consensus on the core definition and basic elements of experiential education. However, as each institution has developed a program with a different focus, program coordinators also make distinctions in their articulation of how experiential learning may be implemented.

Experiential education directors from HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU helped each other refine their programs. Effective collaboration results in direct benefits to each of the collaborators (Kezar, 2005). Early in the initiative, as directors developed their experiential education programs, they worked in parallel, unsure of the degree of competition for the same prospective students. As the programs unfolded, the directors realized that each program targets a different population. In addition, they recognized the benefits of sharing what works in their programs and consulting with each other about dilemmas and challenges. Currently, their collaboration includes the following:

- Sharing with each other the strengths and challenges of their programs.
- Observing instruction and meeting with program participants.
- Exchanging resources (e.g., papers about experiential education and related topics).
- Helping each other connect program participants with professionals for the purpose of field interviews, job placement, or networking.
- Presenting together, in two large conferences, to spread the word about experiential education and to advocate for the integration of experiential learning in education programs.
- Engaging in conversations about the theory and measurable outcomes of experiential learning.
- Helping spread the word about the programs offered by other grantees through their connections within the field.

II. Technology collaboration

In early May 2013, HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU launched the eLearning Collaborative. This program aims to increase the number of faculty members who are trained to provide high-quality instruction using educational technology and, ultimately, the number of online or blended courses at the three institutions. An inter-institutional eLearning Collaborative Leadership Team (ECLT) oversees the implementation of the project. Consultation and instruction for this initiative are provided by the Columbia Center for New Media Teaching and Learning (CCNMTL).

There are two facets to the eLearning Collaborative:

- The Open Collaborative is available to all faculty members at the three institutions. Faculty members can access an online community of practice that hosts a library of resources on technology. Faculty members also can attend three meetings (“Mifgashim”) per year, each one hosted at a different institution.
- The eLearning Faculty Fellowship will include three cohorts of up to 20 individuals each. Participants are selected based on their level of interest in learning about educational technology as well as their favorable attitudes toward collaborating with others. The first cohort includes 20 participants. Throughout the program, fellows will participate in a series of online and face-to-face workshops. The program culminates in an educational technology project that each fellow will design and implement in his or her own teaching environment with the support of his or her home institution. Fellows will present their projects to other fellows, new cohorts, and potential applicants of the program. In addition, a periodic educational technology roundtable with the leadership of the three schools will be held to foster capacity building within the schools.

The ECLT realized that the benefits of the inter-institutional nature of the collaborative are in the combined knowledge, expertise, and perspectives from all three institutions. The workshops developed for this initiative build on CCNMTL’s expertise in state-of-the-art online tools for collaboration and learning as well as each of the institutions’ unique expertise (e.g., addressing online course development from an institutional infrastructure standpoint).

ECLT members have noted that collaboration is a slow process. It took time for the three organizations to sign a memorandum of agreement, identify common goals, and agree on curriculum components that can serve all faculty members. The institutions came with varying levels of experience with educational technology. Determining the depth of instruction to include in the workshops as well as other decisions (e.g., eligibility criteria for workshop participation) added months to the planning process. Another factor that slowed the process was the difficulty coordinating planning meetings and fitting professional development workshops into the already busy schedules of faculty members.

Results of the faculty survey suggested that HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU faculty members were open to the idea of inter-institutional collaboration. According to the faculty survey, more than one half of the respondents reported that their school explored ways to foster collaboration with faculties from other institutions (54 percent) as well as among faculty members at their school (66 percent). Moreover, most of the respondents were interested in building on a professional network outside their institution to grow their knowledge (79 percent). They also were interested in learning more about the use of technology in other higher education institutions (85 percent) and the use of educational technology in other courses within their school (94 percent). Finally, most of the respondents believed that their school could achieve its goals better when working with other schools, regardless of their denomination (88 percent). Nearly two thirds (63 percent) of the respondents reported that deans or program directors at their school have communicated that collaboration with other schools is valued.

One fourth of the faculty members who took the survey reported that they were already engaged in discussions or joint activities with faculty members of the other grantee institutions. In some cases, they maintained relationships as part of serving as instructors or consultants at the other institutions. In other cases, they interacted with other faculty members as part of discussions in course design or at professional meetings and conferences (e.g., conferences organized by the Network for Research in Jewish Education). In summary, preliminary findings from the faculty survey paint a cautiously optimistic picture where many faculty members see the value of the inter-institutional collaboration and feel that the administration at their institution shares the same belief. These findings will be reassessed within the next two years, as additional cohorts of faculty members participate in the eLearning Collaborative.

III. The Jewish Early Childhood Education Leadership Institute (JECELI)

JECELI has been jointly planned and overseen by HUC-JIR and JTS.²⁰ JECELI²¹ targets new and aspiring directors of early childhood Jewish education programs. Through consultation with the Bank Street College of Education, this 15-month program includes intensive face-to-face seminars taught by educators from the Bank Street College of

²⁰ JECELI is the second joint program by HUC-JIR and JTS. In 2004, a \$1.8 million grant was awarded toward the establishment of the Leadership Institute by UJA-Federation of New York's Commission on Jewish Identity and Renewal. The core faculty at the Leadership Institute is drawn from HUC-JIR's New York School of Education and JTS' Davidson Graduate School of Education. The goal of the Institute is to build leadership capacity in Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist congregational and communal schools in New York City (NYC), Long Island, Westchester, and the greater NYC metropolitan region.

²¹ The program website is available at <http://jeceli.org>.

Education, JTS, HUC-JIR, as well as other experts. Additional components of the program include collaborative online work during the fall and winter, mentoring, and a seminar in Israel. The first cohort of the program enrolled 14 program directors and two lead teachers from 16 cities in 10 states.²²

The initial planning built on shared input from stakeholders. Dr. Miriam Westheimer, the program consultant for the JTS Jewish Early Childhood Education Project, convened a meeting of representatives from HUC-JIR and JTS, as well as the early childhood leaders of the Union for Reform Judaism and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. This original working group endorsed the idea of jointly developing and implementing a professional development program for early career and aspiring directors. The working group developed and presented a plan to HUC-JIR and JTS leadership for review in January 2011. HUC-JIR and JTS signed a formal partnership to sponsor and oversee JECCEL and developed a working JECCEL budget that was divided between the two institutions. A search committee comprised of representatives of HUC-JIR, JTS, and Bank Street conducted a national search and hired a director, Lyndall Miller.

Survey results indicated high satisfaction of the JECCEL participants. Participants' input can provide important evidence for assessing the quality of teaching (Richardson, 2005). For the complex organization of staffing provided by the Bank Street College of Education, JTS, and HUC-JIR, this kind of evidence is significant. AIR surveyed 15 of the 16 participants in the first cohort. Survey results showed that 14 of the 15 respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the program's *retreats and face-to-face seminars*; the one person with a lower satisfaction level missed the first retreat. Nine of the 15 respondents reported that they were either very satisfied or satisfied with the program's *online component*. Participants' comments indicated low motivation to use the online learning platform. These findings align with the expressed enrollment goals of participants. The opportunity to connect with other Jewish early childhood educators was one of the enrollment goals of the participants. The ability to take classes online received the lowest rating of importance. As one participant said:

Immersion in the various seminars over a concentrated period of time has allowed me to internalize the concepts being discussed. Learning with others who share the same level of commitment improves the depth of study. Spending concentrated time with the leaders, mentors, and instructors has created an invaluable professional network.

For participants, JECCEL offered what one participant described as “the right combination of early childhood, Judaism, and leadership.” The program has filled a void as there are very few opportunities for leadership programs with a specialization in Jewish early childhood education. Program participants felt that their participation was time well spent. In addition to increasing their networking in the field, most participants strongly agreed that the program improved their ability and tendency to reflect on their learning and experiences, and strengthened their leadership skills.

All participants said that they have already recommended the program or would recommend the program if asked. Following are two examples of participants' reasons for recommending the program:

This program provides amazing professional development opportunities for early childhood leaders. As the field of early childhood changes and becomes more highly

²² The 10 states represented in the program are Arizona, California, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia.



respected, it is necessary for the next group of leaders to be prepared and educated by well-respected individuals in the field. The opportunity to network and build relationships with other directors and teachers is invaluable.

This is a quality leadership program that is beneficial to directors as well as master teachers who aspire to a leadership position. It is an inspiring program, and I feel my first year as a director has been successful as a result of the support I have received in this program.

Conclusions of the Year 2 Evaluation

Findings from the Year 2 evaluation indicate that the Education Initiative changed the practice of a growing number of Jewish educational and communal professionals working in a variety of settings, including day schools, congregational schools, community centers, federations, universities, and social service agencies. The research on the effects of advanced degree and professional development programs on the practice and long-term career aspirations of emerging leaders in communal service and informal education settings is scarce. There is, however, a considerable parallel research that focuses on formal education settings. For example, accumulating research findings suggest that professional development is key for high-quality education as well as the promotion of teacher job satisfaction and retention (JESNA, 2008; National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, 2007). There has been a call in the Jewish education field for greater exposure to high-quality education practices and opportunities to network to support the professional growth of individuals who may become the future communal visionaries (Brown, 2007). These future leaders may operate from formal leadership roles (e.g., program directors) or informal roles (e.g., an educator who is widely depended on for advice and support; Van Velsor, McCauley, & Ruberman, 2010). The programs supported by the Education Initiative target individuals who engage in this wide continuum of leadership roles.

Findings also indicate that the programs offered by HUC-JIR, JTS, and YU empowered working professionals to create new initiatives (e.g., instructional improvement, staff training), and increased the respect they earned from employers and colleagues. Alumni who sought new jobs after graduation reported that their new experiences made them stand out from other members of the applicant pool in terms of expertise in teaching in Jewish education settings. With those accomplishments in mind, there is still uncertainty about the nature and scope of programs, which will need to be sustained by grantees in the long run. This section describes two main challenges that are of immediate concern to grantees: (a) continuing to meet enrollment goals while reducing student financial assistance, and (b) continuing to attract a diverse population of students through online and blended programs while containing program costs.

ISSUE 1: Continuing to meet enrollment goals while reducing student financial assistance

Goal achieved: Nearly all master's programs were successful in meeting their enrollment goals. Recruitment for advanced degrees is a demanding task in general education and even more so in the small Jewish community. For advanced degree programs (across sectors and professional fields), statistics show that it is harder today than in the past to recruit new graduate students. National trends show a decrease in the overall number of new graduate

students, especially among women (Allum, Bell, & Sowell, 2012). Only 9 percent of individuals 25 years of age and older in the United States have a master's or doctoral degree (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). More and more, young people are questioning the value of an advanced degree, and the costs and benefits of graduate education at times of economic uncertainty. There are many reasons—ranging from financial obligations to family and personal responsibilities to concerns about the skill set needed to be a successful graduate student—that may prevent individuals from pursuing advanced degrees (Peterson's, 2013). Despite these difficulties, the grantees were able to attract professionals who aspire to become the next generation of leaders in Jewish education.

Remaining challenge: To make programs sustainable in the long run, grantees need to attract talented candidates while reducing the amount of scholarships offered. The data suggest a low ratio of applications to acceptances per program. Most of the individuals who applied were accepted and offered a full-tuition waiver. For programs to be sustainable, institutions need to explore the cost to educate a student and understand how those costs can be met in a sustainable manner (Elam & Ferrell, 2004). Students who pay tuition are a source of revenue; at the same time, each additional student also generates expenses that may or may not be less than the tuition revenue. For example, Hillman (2012) presented a case study in which an institution generated \$0.48 cents for every dollar charged in tuition. At this pace, the institution would approach long-run fiscal insolvency or at least fiscal strain because the total revenue was not sufficient to cover the program's fixed cost. To avoid this, the institution reduced its tuition discount rate and generated greater amounts of tuition revenue in the process. This solution included a strategic effort to target aid to a smaller portion of the student body while simultaneously analyzing students' willingness to pay.

The challenge is to attract a sufficient number of applicants who are willing to pay tuition. Survey data suggest that one-third of the participants in HUC-JIR and JTS' master's programs would have enrolled even if financial assistance had not been available. The experience of the grantees so far has shown that “high-touch” marketing, which involves strengthening relationships with communities and federations, schools, and other institutions, is the most effective approach in identifying the “right-fit” candidates who are committed to enrolling in advanced degree programs. This approach aligns with expert recommendations of the use of relationship marketing, which involves high-touch, person-to-person communication. It is the most powerful and time-consuming marketing technique because it entails a process rather than a one-time outreach event (Guion, Kent, & Diehl, 2012). Because of the costs associated with this recruitment strategy, more information is needed on its cost-effectiveness.

ISSUE 2: Continuing to attract a diverse population of students through online and blended programs while containing program costs

Goal achieved: The online and blended certificate and leadership programs diversified the student body of the three grantees. The design of the new programs made rigorous professional development from high-reputation institutions available to working professionals and geographically remote educators who otherwise would not have access to such learning opportunities. Grantees were able to attract candidates who represented the entire range of Jewish education settings (e.g., day schools, supplementary schools, synagogues, camps, Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, JCCs, and other organizations and programs).

Remaining challenge: The development and operating costs of the professional development programs are greater than the revenues collected through student tuition. To be attractive and competitive in the market, professional development programs cannot set high tuition rates. Yet, continuous program development costs (e.g., costs associated with updating the curriculum and technology) as well as operating costs (e.g., costs of mentors and off-campus seminars) make programs expensive to maintain. Economists recommend that institutions identify the development and infrastructure costs associated with each program component and enrollment-related costs that change as a function of the number of students enrolled (Capaldi & Abbey, 2011; Levin & McEwan, 2000). Using these data, grantees can identify the circumstances in which costs and revenues may be balanced.

Future Directions

In the third year of the evaluation of the Education Initiative, data accumulated from three years of data collection as well as the advancement of the graduating cohorts in the workforce will enable the evaluation team to address additional research questions, such as:

- What can we learn about the effect of the certificate and leadership programs on classroom excellence and the way schools, camps, youth groups, and community centers engage their communities in Jewish education?
- What can we learn about the career paths of alumni who have benefited from the Education Initiative?
- Who are the career changers, educators, and education leaders who have benefited by the Education Initiative so far, and how do they compare with the potential market of the programs offered?
- How can a better understanding of the potential market assist grantees in strategizing towards long-term sustainability of their programs?

These analyses will aim to provide information to stimulate critical discussions around student recruitment, program design, and alumni connections, and to widen our understanding of the outcomes of the Education Initiative.



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Appendix A.

Overview of the Degree, Certificate, and Leadership Programs

With the contribution of Jim Joseph Foundation Education Initiative funding, multiple Jewish education programs at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), and Yeshiva University (YU) continue to be supported and/or developed. These programs vary in type, length, and focus, but are all designed to provide more knowledge and skills for professionals in Jewish education. Exhibit A-1 displays information about the programs that have been developed and/or supported by the Jim Joseph Foundation Education Initiative.

Exhibit A-1. Education Initiative Support of Program Development or Enhancement

Institution	Program	Program Description	2011-12 Student Enrollment ¹⁰	2011-12 Student Enrollment
Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion	<u>Executive Master's Program</u>	This program is designed for current Jewish education professionals with at least five years of experience to enhance their skills. The program lasts two years and consists of on-site seminars, e-learning courses, and study in Israel for 10 days.	16	12
	Residential Master's Program	The Residential Master's Program includes all students enrolled in MARE (<u>Master of Arts in Religious Education</u>), MAJE (<u>Master of Arts in Jewish Education</u>), and the <u>Rabbinic/Cantorial Education</u> programs. Both MARE and MAJE take three full years to complete.	15	23
	<u>Certificate in Jewish Education for Adolescents and Emerging Adults</u>	This program is designed for professionals looking to gain an understanding in working with youth and young adults. During nine months, students will take a curriculum that consists of online courses, face-to-face intensives, a 10-day institute, mentorship, and a field-related action project.	15	16

²³ One student dropped out of the Certificate in Adolescence and Emerging Adults (CAEA) program. Eighteen applicants were accepted to the Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.) program for 2011–12, but three students dropped out. The Jewish Experiential Leadership Institute (JELI) and Jewish Early Childhood Education Leadership Institute (JECLEI) programs began in 2012–13. Twenty-four applicants were accepted and enrolled in the Differentiated Instruction (DI) program, but four dropped out. Twenty-four applicants were accepted and enrolled in the Educational Technology (ET) program, but seven dropped out. The Online/Blended Instruction and Design program began in 2012–13. Twenty-one applicants were accepted and enrolled in the Certificate in Experiential Jewish Education (EJE) program, but four dropped out.

Institution	Program	Program Description	2011–12 Student Enrollment ¹⁰	2011–12 Student Enrollment
Jewish Theological Seminary	Master's	This master's degree program allows Jewish education students looking to gain skills as teachers and leaders to concentrate in one of three areas: (1) <u>Day School Teaching</u> , (2) <u>Educational Leadership in Synagogues and Communal Settings</u> , and (3) <u>Jewish Experiential Education</u> . Students must earn a minimum of 46 credits above any coursework needed to complete the Hebrew requirement and prerequisites in Judaic Studies. They have the opportunity to study through numerous experiences.	36	41
	<u>Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.)</u>	The doctoral program at JTS can be taken full- or part-time as well as while current professionals in the field are working (executive). This program is designed to prepare academics and senior professionals with at least five years of experience for the growing education needs of North American Jewish communities. The doctoral program requires 63 credits beyond the master's degree.	15	N/A ¹¹
	<u>JELI (Jewish Experiential Leadership Institute)</u>	In partnership with Jewish Community Centers (JCCs) around the country, this program is for those with current leadership roles at JCCs. Fellows in JELI, who are mid- to senior-level professionals at JCCs throughout North America, learn to apply Jewish frameworks to their vision, day-to-day management, and own leadership identity. The 15-month program is offered through online and in-person modalities.	N/A	18 ¹²
	<u>JECALI (Jewish Early Childhood Education Leadership Institute)</u>	This program aims to help Jewish educators with at least five years of professional experience become leaders or directors of Jewish early education programs. For 15 months, JECALI engages select new and aspiring directors in intensive Jewish learning, reflective practice, leadership development, and community building. Multiple learning formats are utilized, including text study, seminars, and mentorships.	N/A	16

¹¹ Not applicable. The program enrolls new students every other year. No admissions were conducted for the 2012–13 academic year.

¹² Twenty applicants were accepted to the first JELI cohort; within a short time, two had left their JCCs and were no longer eligible to participate.

Institution	Program	Program Description	2011-12 Student Enrollment ¹⁰	2011-12 Student Enrollment
Yeshiva University	<u>Accelerated Master's</u>	This one-year program is for students able to attend full time in order to satisfy the 36-credit requirement. The program offers an intensive course of study alongside practical teaching experience in the classroom.	10	10
	<u>Online Differentiated Instruction</u>	Taught entirely online, the certificate program is made up of three 10-week courses that aim to increase Jewish educators' understanding of how to implement differentiated instruction in the classroom.	20	18
	<u>Online Educational Technology</u>	Due to the increase in technology innovations, this 30-week online certificate program teaches effective strategies for working with technology as part of education.	17	25
	<u>Online/ Blended Instruction and Design</u>	The online/blended 30-week certificate program discusses strategies for using the online/blended format for learning. All courses are taught online.	N/A	19
	<u>Experiential Jewish Education (EJE)</u>	Through four weeklong seminars that take place during the course of one year, the EJE certificate program teaches educators to make Jewish education engaging and enjoyable. Seminars are held in various locations.	17	21



Appendix B.

Price Sensitivity Analysis

Online surveys asked participants to indicate what tuition value would be (a) almost too expensive but within an affordable range, (b) too expensive, (c) a bargain, and (d) too cheap given the value of the program. Using these data, the minimum, optimal, and maximum affordable tuition rates were calculated using pricing analysis based on the Van Westendorp Pricing Model (Van Westendorp, 1976; Exhibit B-1).

Exhibit B-1. Comparison of Tuition Charged Versus Tuition Students are Willing to Pay by Program¹³

Program	Tuition Value (2012-13)	Minimum Affordable (% of tuition Value)	Optimal Price Point (% of tuition value)	Maximum Affordable (% of tuition value)
Certificate and Leadership Programs				
Certificate in Adolescents and Emerging Adults (Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion [HUC-JIR])	\$16,000	\$1,111 (7%)	\$1,833 (12%)	\$3,833 (24%)
Differentiated Instruction/Educational Technology/Blended	\$2,500	\$1,111 (7%)	\$875 (35%)	\$1,000 (40%)
Certificate in Experiential Jewish Education	\$3,500	\$400 (11%)	\$1,100 (31%)	\$1,200 (34%)
Advanced Degree Programs				
Executive Master's (HUC-JIR)	\$21,000	\$4,200 (20%)	\$3,200 (15%)	\$7,000 (33%)
Residential Master's (HUC-JIR)	\$21,000	\$4,000 (19%)	\$6,000 (29%)	\$8,750 (42%)
Master's in Jewish Education (Jewish Theological Seminary [JTS]) (per semester)	\$12,295	\$2,400 (20%)	\$3,000 (24%)	\$3,900 (32%)
Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.), Executive Ed.D. (JTS) (per semester)	\$16,150	\$300 (2%)	\$1,500 (9%)	\$2,000 (12%)

¹³ Information for the Yeshiva University's Accelerated Master's program is not available because of the small sample size (i.e., less than 10 survey respondents).



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