

## OUTREACH INCENTIVE GRANT FUNDING: END-OF-YEAR PROJECT REPORT

Title of Proposal: Partnership for the Academic Study of Early Judaism: A Multi-Cultural and Multi-Generational Approach to Community Engagement in the Humanities

Your Name: Erin Darby

Project Date: February-April 2014

Additional project support received from other university or external sources:

Source	Amount	Title
Knoxville Jewish Alliance	\$1,345.00	

**Please use this sheet to answer each of the following questions about your project (1-2 pp total)**

1. **ASSESSMENT:** How did this project document or assess its engagement with the community?

Questionnaires were distributed at the end of each of three public outreach seminars. In addition to providing feedback during the course of the seminar series, the results were compiled together for analysis after the final meeting. The forms were instrumental in forming the executive committee that will plan next year's events. The results were presented at the executive committee meeting in May and have already been influential in deciding future topics and formats.

2. **PARTNERSHIP/RECIPROCITY:** How did the university and community work together?

The seminar series was led jointly by a member of UT faculty and a KJA board member, and the planning committee consisted of representatives from UT Judaic Studies, UT Religious Studies, the KJA director, a KJA board member, and UT Hillel. In addition to these members the executive committee for next year adds two community members and Rabbi Ferency from Heska Amuna Synagogue. UT and KJA pooled resources for necessary expenditures.

3. **BENEFITS:** What were the benefits (University/community) of this partnership?

The seminar series was highly successful and reached a number of participants from across east Tennessee, including a great many members of the Knoxville Jewish Alliance. More, by attracting community participants outside the KJA, the events increased exposure to KJA among non-members across the Knoxville community. The partnership with KJA was integral for the success of the University program, especially regarding advertisements, meeting locations, planning, and refreshments. The series also provided an additional outlet for many UT students to engage community members and the academic study of marriage and family in the Bible and the Near East. The seminars also provided a venue for UT faculty and Knoxville community members to think more carefully about recruiting for the Religious Studies and Judaic Studies programs. In general, the seminars were successful at integrating a variety of communities representing different age groups and religious backgrounds and brought together participants from different educational institutions across the area.

4. **SHARED DECISION-MAKING:** Did the community have a "voice" or role for input into this project?

The community was represented on the initial planning committee and on the newly-formed executive committee. They responded to questionnaires at each seminar and gave oral feedback throughout each seminar.

5. **SCHOLARSHIP:** Are there any examples of faculty scholarship that will be informed by this project?

Forthcoming publications:

Erin Darby. "Sex." *Routledge Dictionary of Ancient Mediterranean Religions*, ed. Eric M. Orlin

Erin Darby. "Marriage." *Routledge Dictionary of Ancient Mediterranean Religions* ed. Eric M. Orlin

6. **CONCLUSIONS:** What conclusions and best practices can be drawn from the partnership?

Partnerships that include cooperative leadership representing both the University and the community seem to function most effectively. While the University can provide certain services, like lectures, community organizations have a more accurate picture of community needs and logistical details, such as when and where to hold events and the most successful advertising outlets.

7. **FUTURE PLANS:** What are the future plans for this partnership?

The executive committee has decided to plan 4 events for the next academic year, which will be a combination of lectures from academics outside the UT community and faculty-led seminars. The committee discussed a number of themes suggested by community members. Since feedback from the questionnaires was very positive, the committee decided to adopt the same framework for future events. The feedback also suggested that the advertising strategy adopted this past year was successful, and will the committee will use this as a model for future years as well.

# End of Year Report: Partnership for the Academic Study of Early Judaism

Erin Darby

## Attendance:

February 27: 24+ 2 speakers+ 1 KJA employee + 1 Hillel =28

March 27<sup>th</sup>: 35 + 2 speakers + 1 KJA employee = 38 + 8-10 non responding

April 24<sup>th</sup>: 21 + 3 speaker + 1 KJA employee = 25

## 2014 Planning committee:

Erin Darby, Raphe Panitz, Gilya Schmidt, Deborah Oleshansky, Rabbi Ferency, Jeff Gubitz, Marion and Larry Bayer

## Christian denominations participating:

Methodist, Baptist, Unitarian, Lutheran, Presbyterian

## Age Diversity:

We succeeded at integrating College students, primarily through students enrolled in course work and those students inviting their friends. We did not succeed in recruiting High School students. We did hold a pre-session event for High School students and their parents to meet UT faculty and discuss the UT Religious Studies and Judaic Studies programs, but no students attended. Discussion

among the executive committee at this time focused on identifying challenges, including the possibility that UT recruitment, especially in Judaic Studies, pulls more students from outside of Knoxville. Action points include sending information about Religious Studies and Judaic Studies out with Hillel packets for prospective and newly-accepted students and to target community leaders who might need to learn more about the programs.

### **Suggested speakers and topics:**

Surveys: Peggy Cowan at Maryville College, military, property rights, languages, Halakhic law/Marriage, Israelite conquest narrative and ramification for modern day, other laws, dietary, tithing, Sabbath, cultural background of OT, intertestamental period, Gilya Schmidt, Holocaust, Alec Mishory, prophets, liberal scholarship, nomadic peoples, birth of ancient cities, biblical issues, Year of Jubilee, kosher

Planning committee suggestions for next year: have list of regional speakers, such as Carrie Duncan, Leong Seow, Ziony Zevit, Allen Cooper, Jacob Wright? if we do warfare Rabbi can do warfare in Rabbinic tradition.

Aim for 2 per semester, can add more

Date: Post Simchas Torah... Tuesday Oct 28 or Thursday 30; December 2, 4, 9, 11, Rosh Hashanah is 24<sup>th</sup> of September

### **Financial Statement:**

We used little of the UT money. The advertisement placed in the Sentinel was not more effective than listing the event in the free calendar. KJA supplied almost all of the food for all three events. No speaker fees.

Comparative Chart

Question	Feb 27 (20 surveys)	March 27 (35 surveys)	April 24 (21 survey)
You found seminar helpful and informative	4.75	4.54	4.62
You found this seminar stimulating	4.75	4.40	4.62
You felt comfortable participating	4.65	4.23	4.52
Rate your interest in the material before attending the seminar	4.30	4.44	4.57
Rate the likelihood you will attend future events	4.30	4.03	4.33
The participants represented a diverse set of backgrounds and age groups	4.40	4.06	4.10
Did you attend the last event?	na	34% (12 people) returnees	71% (15 people) returnees
How did you learn about this event	no Knoxnews ad 30% UT class 35% KJA 10% friends/rel 10% Raphe 5% social media	49% Knoxnews 23% UT class/student 11% KJA 6% friends 6% Raphe 3% social media	14% Knoxnews 10% UT student/class 29% KJA 19% friends/rel 14% Raphe
Do you identify with a religious tradition? If so, which one?	25% Christian 75% Jewish	63% Christian 23% Jewish	48% Christian 48% Jewish
With which gender(s) do you most closely identify?	65%F 35%M	54%F 23%M 23% na	48% F 48% M
With which races or ethnic group(s) do you most closely identify?	5% non-Caucasian 10% no answer	3% non-Caucasian 29% na	0% non-Caucasian 19% not answer





Question 4: Rate your interest in the material before attending the seminar																																								
5	5	5	na	4	4	5	2	4	4	4	5	4.44																												
Question 5: Rate the likelihood you will attend future events																																								
4	5	4	4	4	2	4	4	4	5	4	5	4.03																												
Question 6: The participants represented a diverse set of backgrounds and age groups																																								
5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	3	4	4.06																												
Question 7: Did you attend the last event on February 27 <sup>th</sup>																																								
n	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	34% (12 people) returnees																												
Question 8: How did you learn about this event																																								
knoxnews	Dr. Darby	KJA, Dr. Darby, Panitz	knoxnews	knoxnews	knoxnews	knoxnews	UTK event calendar	Dr. Darby	Public media	KJA	Facebook	knoxnews	knoxnews	knoxnews	knoxnews	knoxnews	no answer	KJA	various	Raphe and Erin	knoxnews	knoxnews	knoxnews	Dr. Darby, flyers	knoxnews	daughter in UT class	UT student	knoxnews	UT class, Hillel	friends	Knoxnews	Dr. Darby class	KJA	Knoxnews	49% news	23% UT class/student	11% KJA	6% friends	6% Raphe	3% social media
Question 9: Do you identify with a religious tradition? If so, which one																																								





none
none
none
none
none
none
none
none
cultural background of OT, intertestamental period
none
none
none
other laws, dietary, tithing, sabbath
none
none
none
none
meaning of fornication
start "on time"
none
none
none
none
Israelite conquest narrative, ramification for modern day
none
none
women
none
none
none
none
none
military
none
none

April 24

Question 1: You found this seminar helpful and informative										
5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	4.62
Question 2: You found this seminar engaging										
5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	4.62
Question 3: You felt comfortable participating										
4	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	4	4	4.52
Question 4: Rate your interest in the material before attending the seminar										
5	5	4	5	5	4	4	3	5	5	4.57
Question 5: Rate the likelihood you will attend future events										
5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	3	4	4.33



none
kosher
none
none
none
none
Year of Jubilee
none
none
none
none
none
biblical issues
none
none
none
none
none
nomadic peoples, birth of ancient cities
none
prophets, liberal scholarship
Gilya Schmidt, Holocaust, Alec Mishory

Comments of note: "Thank you so much for welcoming Christians who are interested in meeting other people from other traditions and also for addressing Biblical issues in a logical and professional fashion"