



Knowledge For College 2017

Session I - Sunday, January 29th at University Synagogue
Time 4:00 – 7:30PM

Topic I: Why should students connect to their Jewish heritage in college? Why should Jewish American students care about Israel? What is our connection to the land of Israel? Rabbi Feinstein will lead a discussion on how our Jewish identity connects us to the land of Israel, and give our students additional thoughts and information to consider as they think about their future college experience, as well as how Israel fits into our Jewish identity.

Keynote Speaker – Rabbi Ed Feinstein of Valley Beth Shalom Synagogue

Rabbi Ed Feinstein is senior rabbi of Valley Beth Shalom in Encino, California. He has served on the faculty of the Ziegler Rabbinical School of Rabbinic Studies at American Jewish University since 1990 and is an instructor for the Wexner Heritage Program, lecturing widely across the United States. Rabbi Feinstein is the author of three books. *Tough Questions Jews Ask – A Young Adult’s Guide to Building a Jewish Life*, (Jewish Lights, 2003), was chosen for the American Library Association’s Top Ten Books on Religion for Young Readers and a finalist for the National Jewish Book Award.

Topic II – Professor Charbit will engage the students into an innovative and experiential approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. His ability to present the various narratives to the conflict according to a nuanced and empathic methodology is a breath of fresh air. By focusing on the core feelings and needs of both parties, he enables the audience to understand better this very complex and long-standing conflict. This interactive presentation will equip the participants with valuable knowledge and will give them a genuine appreciation of the various viewpoints as a key to an open and balanced conversation.

Keynote Speaker – Professor Denis Charbit, Visiting Israeli Political Science Professor

Denis Charbit is a political scientist from Israel's Open University, and currently a visiting professor to UCI's Political Science Department, as part of the Israel Institute's efforts to bring Israeli scholars and artists to other parts of the world to enhance other's knowledge of Israel. Mr. Charbit specializes in intellectual and cultural history, the history of ideas (Zionism), Israeli politics, and politics and religion.

Session II – Sunday, February 5th at Congregation B'nai Israel
Time 4:00PM – 6:30PM (Dinner included)

Topic I: Many parents and students are concerned about anti-Israel activity on college campuses. This session will address what we are seeing on campus and who is driving the activity. We'll discuss the BDS movement and the anti-Israel narrative and intersectionality as well as free speech, hate speech and the difference between anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. We will also explore what Jewish student life is like on many campuses, how to prepare for a campus that is known to experience anti-Israel activity, and ways for students to be effective and impactful in their campus communities.

Keynote Speaker – Lisa Armony, Executive Director of Hillel Foundation of Orange County and director of the Rose Project of Jewish Federation & Family Services, OC. She oversees the operations of Hillel chapters at UCI, Chapman University and CSUF, and develops educational programs and initiatives about Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for students of diverse faiths and backgrounds.

Topic II: What is Jewish life on college campus truly like? Does the BDS movement change the college experience for Jewish students? How do Jewish students navigate campus and get involved both? What is it like to experience a BDS vote on campus? Students will have an opportunity to ask questions to current students and recent alumni, as well as Hillel International to get a cross-campus perspective.

Panel Discussion Includes: Tina Malka (Associate Director for Israel Education with Hillel's Israel Action Program, HINENU), as well as current UCLA student and acting USAC President, Danny Siegel; Danna Creager, UCLA Mentorship Engagement Fellow; and Nirit Wigdor, alumni of SDSU and past president of SDSU SSI (Students Supporting Israel) chapter in 2014 during BDS vote)

Session III – Sunday, February 12th at Congregation B'nai Israel
4:00 – 6:30PM (Dinner included)

Topic I: How to engage in civic (and civil) dialogue on controversial topics such as the Israeli-Arab conflict or BDS, that may generate hostility, anxiety and discomfort. Students will learn about and experience simple strategies about how to react in order to "lower the flames". The setting will be an interactive workshop with case studies and role play, followed by reflective discussions.

Keynote Speaker - Myriam Darmoni Charbit – Director of Civics and Shared life Education, Center for Educational Technology in Tel Aviv. Myriam heads a team of ten staff members from various groups in the Israeli society. Her work focuses on developing strategies and resources for teachers to nurture civic dialogue in the classrooms and to engage Jewish and Arab educators in Israel into meaningful conversations and joint learning initiatives between their schools. CET's programs are based upon strategic partnerships with the Ministry of Education, municipalities such as Jerusalem, Ramleh, Taybeh, Hod Hasharon, Kalansawa and also with Teachers' Colleges. These programs are made possible thanks to the generous contribution of Jewish foundations in the US.

Topic II – Real life student experiences, and how they have changed us.

Guest Speakers – Lauren Kerner (UCI student, and 2016 Summer intern at YaLa Young Leaders founded by the Peres Institute). Lauren will discuss her experience taking the UCI Hillel trip to Israel, as well as her summer internship in Jaffa, Israel at the Peres Institute. We will also hear from both Jewish and non-Jewish students that attended the Olive Tree Project trip to Israel, and they will share their experiences and how it has impacted them to give them a better perspective on the complexities surrounding the State of Israel.