

**The Placement of  
Newly-Ordained Rabbis**

**A Handbook of Procedures**

**The Rabbinical Placement Commission,  
Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion  
and  
The Class of 2010/5770**

[www.huc.edu](http://www.huc.edu)  
[www.ccarnet.org](http://www.ccarnet.org)

(as of September 15, 2009)

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# INTRODUCTION

This booklet explains the procedures established by the Rabbinical Placement Commission (RPC) and the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) for the placement of senior rabbinical students. This document incorporates by reference *Guidelines for Rabbinical-Congregational Relationships* (available on-line at: <http://URJ.org/leadership/gl/gl4.html>).

This handbook is intended for use by both congregational search committees and senior rabbinical students. It is our hope that the guiding principles and the placement procedures outlined here will create an environment for placement that will benefit both congregations and rabbinical candidates. It is important for all participants in the placement process to review this handbook carefully as they enter placement; it will answer many questions.

## **The Partnership between Rabbi and Congregation**

For more than two millennia, the synagogue has served our people as *Beit T'fillah*, House of Prayer; *Beit Midrash*, House of Study; and *Beit K'nesset*, House of Assembly. As it fulfills these classic roles, the modern congregation becomes worthy of the designation *kehillah kedoshah*, a holy community.

Sacred Jewish values underlie the partnership between rabbi and congregation; it is a covenant through which each party undertakes the obligation of working together in the service of God and the Jewish people. That covenant begins as early as the placement process.

## **A Vision of the Placement Process**

*Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi said – "Which is the proper path that one should select? The one that seems honorable for oneself and brings honor bestowed by others." [Pirke Avot 2:1]*

The purpose of these guidelines is: 1) to create the best possible matches between candidates and congregations; 2) to afford all candidates equal access to available positions; 3) to afford all congregations equal access to candidates; and 4) to ensure fairness in the placement process for all congregations and soon to be ordained rabbis. This handbook is designed to help facilitate communication, the gathering and sharing of information, and the participation in the rabbinical placement process.

## THE FOUR PHASES OF PLACEMENT: AN OVERVIEW

Phase One: The Preparatory Phase begins when a congregation decides to engage a rabbi and concludes on the first day of interviews (February 21, 2010).

Phase Two: The On-Campus Interview Phase begins on the New York campus of HUC-JIR on Sunday morning, February 21, 2010 and concludes in the evening on Tuesday, February 23, 2010. All congregations and all students are expected to be available for interviews during this entire phase.

Phase Three: The On-Site Interview Phase begins on February 25, 2010 and concludes on March 23, 2010. **No interviews are to take place during the CCAR convention, March 7 – 10; extra days have been built into the On-Site Interview Phase to include that hiatus.**

Phase Four: The Matching Phase, March 24-25, 2010, begins after all students and all congregations have concluded their on-site interviews.

After the matching is completed on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010, the Rabbinical Placement office continues to work with those congregations and students who are still seeking a match.

### IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

#### Rabbinical Placement Office:

Rabbi Lennard Thal, Interim Director of Placement  
Ms. Maria Thompson  
355 Lexington Avenue  
New York, NY 10017  
(212) 972-3636 x 234 – Rabbi Thal  
(212) 972-3636 x 233 – Ms. Thompson  
Fax: (212) 692-0819  
[lthal@ccarnet.org](mailto:lthal@ccarnet.org) or [mthompson@ccarnet.org](mailto:mthompson@ccarnet.org)

#### HUC-JIR, Cincinnati Campus:

Rabbi Ken Kanter, Director of the Rabbinical Program  
Ms. Deborah Xander  
3101 Clifton Avenue  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45220  
(513) 487-3256 – Rabbi Kanter  
(513) 487-3237 – Ms. Xander  
Fax: (513) 221-0321  
[kkanter@huc.edu](mailto:kkanter@huc.edu) or [dxander@huc.edu](mailto:dxander@huc.edu)

#### HUC-JIR Los Angeles Campus:

Dr. Dvora Weisberg, Director of the Rabbinical Program  
Ms. Andrea Namaste  
3077 University Avenue  
Los Angeles, California 90007-3796  
(213) 765-2103 – Dr. Weisberg  
(213) 765-2102 – Ms. Namaste  
Fax: (213) 749-3445  
[dweisberg@huc.edu](mailto:dweisberg@huc.edu) or [anamaste@huc.edu](mailto:anamaste@huc.edu)

#### HUC-JIR, New York Campus:

Rabbi Renni Altman, Director of the Rabbinical Program  
Ms. Tracy Neale  
One West Fourth Street  
New York, New York 10012  
(212) 824-2278 – Rabbi Altman  
212- 824-2230 – Ms. Neale  
Fax: (815) 550-1377  
[raltman@huc.edu](mailto:raltman@huc.edu) or [tneale@huc.edu](mailto:tneale@huc.edu)

## THE PLACEMENT PROCESS: FOR STUDENTS

### I. The Preparatory Phase: Now until the first day of interviews (February 21, 2010).

- A. Newly-ordained Rabbis are eligible for congregational positions that fit into four broad categories:
1. Solo Rabbis: Seniors are eligible to seek solo positions classified by the Rabbinical Placement Commission as Category A Congregations (up to 300 family units). They are not eligible for solo positions with larger congregations. A solo rabbi is responsible for working with the other professionals in the congregation, fulfilling the many roles that might arise as the only rabbi in a congregation, including but not limited to life cycle events, holidays, worship, teaching, counseling, and much more.
  2. Assistant Rabbis: Seniors are eligible to seek positions listed as Assistant Rabbi. Primarily the Senior Rabbi, in consultation with the appropriate congregational body, shall define an Assistant Rabbi's duties. In performing these duties, the Assistant shall be supervised by the Senior Rabbi and be responsible to the Senior Rabbi and the Board of Trustees.
  3. Rabbi-Educator: Some congregations look to the new rabbi to take charge of the congregation's educational program. There are some students who are uniquely equipped to do so, either because they have earned a Master's Degree in Jewish Education at HUC-JIR or elsewhere, have pursued education courses or a degree in a secular university, or have had extensive practical experience in Jewish education. Some may have qualified for the title of Reform Jewish Educator. These jobs will typically contain some rabbinical tasks, such as conducting services or sharing in holiday experiences, in addition to the many tasks of the Educator in the congregation.
  4. Part-Time Positions: Congregations may engage a senior to serve on a part-time basis, either as Rabbi or Assistant Rabbi. The duties and responsibilities should be precisely defined in writing, specifying how many hours each week and how many days per month are to be devoted to the part-time post. The part-time rabbi should be elected for a fixed term and receive pro-rated pension and all other benefits when that service is considered to be half-time or more.

All of these positions are handled through the Placement Process.

### B. Available Positions

1. All available congregational positions will be listed on the Rabbinical Placement Commission website of the CCAR ([www.ccarnet.org](http://www.ccarnet.org)). Students will receive the

password and user name to log onto the site from their Program Director. Congregations are asked to submit their applications by January 7, 2010.

2. Students who wish to apply for positions in non-URJ congregations need to adhere to the guidelines established by the appropriate placement organizations. **No job offers for non-URJ listed congregations may be accepted before March 25, 2010. While students may explore non-congregational (e.g. Hillel, WUPJ, organizational positions, day schools, etc.) positions at any time, a student may not accept such a position until his/her thesis has been accepted.**
  3. Students may find themselves serving as interns in a congregation that is considering hiring an Assistant Rabbi or Rabbi-Educator. In such a case, the congregation may enter placement and the student may apply for the position. The congregation also has the option of offering the position to the student before placement. The student may choose to accept the position or enter into placement. In such a case, the congregation and student must notify the interim placement director and their program director in writing of their decision by January 7, 2010.
- C. In preparation for interviews, students need to complete their resumes and personal statements, and create a portfolio.
1. Resumes and personal statements must follow the guidelines listed on the Rabbinical Placement Commission website of the CCAR ([www.ccarnet.org](http://www.ccarnet.org)).
  2. Resumes and personal statements are due to the Rabbinical Program Director on the student's campus by January 14, 2010.
  3. Students may want to prepare a simple portfolio to leave with the interview committee that will give them a sense of the students' work. A portfolio should include 3-5 items and might include a sermon, eulogy, course curriculum, bulletin article, etc. It should be bound in a simple manner. In accordance with CCAR guidelines, pictures may not be included. A portfolio should not require extensive funds or energy to compile, but only serve to supplement the interview and personal statement.
- D. Introducing the Available Positions: Prior to the on-campus interview period, the Interim Director of Rabbinic Placement meets with the senior class, both as a group and individually, to better acquaint them with the vacancies available for their consideration and to offer counsel as they make their preliminary choices.
- E. Information Gathering: Just as congregations use resumes and references to learn about candidates prior to the on-campus interview, seniors will want to learn about the congregations.
1. Appropriate sources of information: students may visit congregations' websites and request copies of bulletins and membership information. Students may choose to speak with their rabbinical mentors or colleagues in the field. They may also contact the Union Rabbi for the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) district in which the congregation is located as well as former staff members of the congregation.

2. Inappropriate sources of information: To limit the potential for self-advocacy, a student may not seek information about a congregation by contacting those who are likely to be directly involved in the congregation's rabbinical search. These people include: the continuing rabbi(s), other continuing members of the congregation's professional staff, members of the search committee, and current board members. Students who are currently serving a congregation participating in the placement process should make every attempt to refrain from inappropriate self-advocacy or information gathering.

#### F. Advocacy

During the Preparatory Phase, seniors may not advocate for their employment interests with an employee or member of a searching congregation. Self-advocacy includes, but is not limited to: forwarding of resumes or other materials outside the standard placement process; use of electronic media or social networking sites for self-promotion; intentional social contact for the purpose of advocating employment interests (including at rabbinical conferences or URJ functions); encouraging others to advocate on the student's behalf, and any other oral or written expression of interest in a position with a congregation, whether direct, indirect, expressed, or implied.

- G. Selecting Congregations: Students may apply to **no more than 12 congregations**. They must email or fax their selections to the Rabbinical Program Director on their campus by **January 14, 2010**. The Rabbinical Program directors will then send students' resumes to the listed congregations. Part of the nature of the placement process is that congregations will enter and withdraw from the process after the submission date. Therefore, it is recommended that students leave a couple of spaces open for congregations that come into the placement process after January 14. Students may not drop a congregation from their list. Students may only add congregations to their list to replace those that have withdrawn from placement or if new congregations enter the process. All lists must be finalized by **February 16, 2010**.

## II. On-Campus Interview Phase: HUC-JIR New York, February 21, 2010 – February 23, 2010

- A. Introduction: This is the period during which interviews are conducted. Self-advocacy and information-gathering are restricted until the time of the student's on-campus interview. Once this interview has taken place, contacts between students and congregations are not restricted except in one way: **students and congregations may not discuss their intentions regarding on-site interviews or their prioritized lists.**
- B. Dates and Times of Interviews: The interviews this year will be held ONLY on the New York campus of HUC-JIR and will extend from 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, February 21, 2010 until the evening of Tuesday, February 23, 2010. Students are expected to be available for interviews throughout this period. Every interested student will be granted an interview. Interviews will last 40 minutes, allowing some time between interviews for deliberation or relaxation. Students from the Cincinnati and Los Angeles campuses will be in New York for this on-campus phase.

- C. Content of the On-Campus Interview: Interviews should be seen by both parties as an opportunity not only to impress each other, but to get to know each other. Each party will be tempted to stress strengths and overlook weaknesses. It is essential for each to risk being honest with the other. Candidates should not be asked questions relating to physical appearance, sexual preference, marital or family status.
- D. HUC-JIR in New York will provide breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, and refreshments for all applicants. The food will be kosher and vegetarian options will be available. HUC-JIR will not reimburse any student meal expenses except for those incurred while traveling.

**III. The On-Site Interview Phase** begins on Thursday, February 25 and concludes on Tuesday, March 23, 2010. (No interviews are to take place during the CCAR convention, March 7 – 10; extra days have been built into the On-Site Interview Phase to include that hiatus.)

Initial offers are to be extended on Thursday, February 25 only from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon Eastern Time. Students will **not** respond to offers extended during these phone calls. Students **will** respond to all offers **between 12:00 noon and 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time. After 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time**, congregations may again extend offers. Students may respond to these offers immediately. If a student accepts the invitation, he or she must follow through with the on-site interview. Similarly, congregations may not withdraw an offer once it has been extended.

**No offers of employment may be made during this period, nor shall students or congregations give any indication of where they would rank the other. Candidates should not be expected to travel on Shabbat.**

- A. Planning a travel itinerary: Students will arrange flights and travel times, considering the schedule of the congregations involved. Students will submit travel receipts to the congregations they visit for reimbursement of travel expenses.
- B. Preparation for on-site interviews: In advance of the interviews, students should prepare questions to ask of the search committee about the congregation.
- C. Inviting the Spouse or Significant Other: It is customary to invite a candidate's spouse or significant other to accompany the candidate on a congregational visit, since he or she will be involved in making choices. If the congregation extends this invitation, then the congregation is assumed to be responsible for the expenses of the spouse or significant other as well as the candidate. The spouse or significant other, however, is not to be interviewed, unless he or she is formally applying for a position within the congregation. Congregations should put the spouse or significant other in touch with resource people for information on jobs, housing and cultural life. No undue pressure by the congregation, its affiliates, or its members may be placed upon the spouse or significant other to accept or to decline any job offer.
- D. The content of the on-site interview: Congregations and students should discuss, in advance, what will be scheduled in the on-site interview.

1. Suggested areas of exploration: Search committees and candidates may find it useful to explore some of the following areas: theology, religious practice, social issues, particular interests for the congregation or the candidate, programs they would like to establish, and past experiences.
2. Meetings: In addition to meeting with the search committee and the professional staff, many congregations use the on-site interview to allow various constituencies within the congregation to meet the candidate. Visits with youth groups, religious school committees, adult learners, and other congregational committees and auxiliary groups are all appropriate.
3. Activities: The itinerary of an on-site interview should be designed to best promote the process by which congregations and candidates evaluate each other. At the same time, care should be taken to prepare a worthwhile informative visit that does not overburden the candidate. Congregations and students, by mutual consent, may decide in advance of a candidate's arrival, to include in the on-site visit some activities in addition to individual and panel interviews. These activities should be limited in duration and in a natural and authentic setting. Such activities may include *divrei Torah*, invocations and benedictions at board meetings and brief teaching opportunities. **Students may not be asked to deliver sample sermons, lead services, preach on Shabbat, or participate in mock counseling sessions.** These additional activities should not constitute the bulk of the on-site visit and must be agreed upon in advance so that the student will have adequate preparation time.
4. Photographs and videotapes: The use of photographs and videotapes of the student is not permitted at any time during the interview process.
5. Financial Arrangements: It is understood that when a congregation seeks to engage a rabbi, a fair salary and benefits package will be offered. The disclosure and discussion of the specific salary and benefits should occur no later than the time that the student is visiting the congregation for a second interview. The candidates must have sufficient information to enable them to indicate their preferences in the matching system. Congregations and students should discuss openly all employment information including, but not limited to: health insurance for the rabbi's family, vacation, retirement, other benefits, and any other concerns of either party that may be part of an employment agreement. (See Appendix A on p. 17.)
6. Job description: The student should leave the on-site interview with a clear understanding of the job description and responsibilities.

#### **IV. Matching Phase: March 24 -25, 2010**

- A. Double-blind Match Philosophy: A committee of rabbis, lay-leaders, and HUC-JIR faculty, students and administrators recommended the double-blind match system beginning with the Class of 1997. The double-blind match system protects the privacy of congregations' and students' preferences and, therefore, allows congregations and students to begin their relationships on the basis of mutual respect and dignity.
- B. Double-blind Match Ethics
  1. Direct Contact: Following the on-site visit and prior to their submission of ranking lists, students may not contact anyone associated with a congregation in order to elicit congregational preferences; students may contact the congregation to clarify

issues raised in the interview, ask follow-up questions, etc. Following the on-site visit and prior to the submission of ranking lists, no one associated with a congregation may contact students except to clarify issues raised in the interview, ask follow up questions, etc.

2. Indirect Contact: During this period, students and congregations may not use a third party to negotiate or relay information on their behalf. Third parties include, but are not limited to: HUC-JIR students, alumni, faculty members, administrators, and listed references.
3. Response: If congregations or students should receive such propositions as mentioned above in B.1. and B.2., they must graciously refuse to inform the initiator of their preferences or intentions. An appropriate response to such a situation is: "I appreciate your interest. However, the guidelines that govern the placement process do not permit me to discuss my preferences or intentions outside of the standard placement process."

### C. Double-blind Match Procedures

1. Prioritized lists: Each student will create a prioritized list of congregations. This list is tantamount to an agreement on the part of the student to serve any congregation that matches with him/her. For this reason, great care should be taken in drawing up this final list. Similarly, each congregation will create a prioritized list of students, also tantamount to an agreement on the part of the congregation to engage any student who matches with that congregation.

Should either a congregation or a student determine after interviewing that no match appears to be suitable, the option is available not to submit a list. If a congregation or student chooses not to submit a list, that congregation or student will not be matched and may continue to participate in the placement process by working with the Rabbinical Placement office.

2. Submission of lists: Students and congregations will submit their prioritized lists to HUC-JIR *no later than* 12:00 noon (Eastern Time) on March 24, 2010. The lists are to be faxed or emailed to **all three** stateside campuses:

513-221-0321 (Cincinnati) or [kkanter@huc.edu](mailto:kkanter@huc.edu) AND  
815-550-1377 (New York) or [Raltman@huc.edu](mailto:Raltman@huc.edu) AND  
213-749-3445 (Los Angeles) or [deweisberg@huc.edu](mailto:deweisberg@huc.edu).

NOTE THAT NO LISTS OR CHANGES WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THAT TIME.

3. Matching process: The matching process, supervised by HUC-JIR and the RPC will occur on March 24, 2010 after 12:00 noon (Eastern Time). No lists or changes will be accepted after that deadline. The Rabbinical Program Directors on each campus will match congregational and student lists, keeping the list contents strictly confidential. The first round of matches will consist of those congregations and students who ranked one another first choice. For example, if Congregation A ranks student 5 as its "first choice" and student 5 ranks Congregation A his/her

"first choice", then Congregation A and student 5 are matched. After all these "first choice" matches have been made, matched congregations and students will be removed from remaining lists and rankings adjusted accordingly. Then remaining lists will be matched on an adjusted first choice basis.

The matching process models the offering and acceptance of positions on the open market. For that reason, if cases come up in the matching process where students and congregations cross-list one another, student preference will determine the outcome. The following example shows how this works:

C1 and C2 are congregations. Sa and Sb are students. They submit the following placement lists:

	First Choice	Second Choice
Sa	C1	C2
Sb	C2	C1
C1	Sb	Sa
C2	Sa	Sb

Because student preference will determine the outcome and no 1-to-1 match is possible, the results will be:

Sa matched with C1  
Sb matched with C2

This is the only sort of case where student preference is directly determinative of outcome. Otherwise, the combination of student and congregation preference is considered to make matches.

4. Notification: On March 25, 2010, the Directors of the Rabbinical Program on each campus will notify congregations and students of their matches. Congregations will then call students by 5:00 PM Eastern Time to welcome them and begin planning for the future.

#### **IV. Continuing the Search after Match Day**

It is often the case that a small number of congregations and students do not match as a result of this placement process. Students still seeking a match should call the Office of Rabbinical Placement (212-972-3636 x 233) to discuss their options. Listings of congregations and other organizations needing rabbis continue to be posted on the CCAR website. Students should also be in contact with the Director of the Rabbinical Program on their campus.

**It is our experience that some of the most successful placements are made at this time.**

## V. Enforcement

The goals stated in this handbook are intended to afford all candidates equal access to the available positions and to afford congregations equal access to the candidates. In light of these objectives, failure to uphold the guidelines contained in this booklet or their inherent spirit is viewed with *great concern* by all those who, in good faith, take part in this process. Any breach of these guidelines is subject to the rules and procedures for ethics complaints contained in the Code of Ethics for Rabbis adopted by the CCAR (available online at <http://ccarnet.org/code.html>). Any candidate or congregational search committee is encouraged to express concerns about possible violations immediately to a Rabbinical Program Director at HUC-JIR or the Interim Director of Rabbinical Placement.

## The Placement Process: For Congregations

**I. The Preparatory Phase:** Begins when a congregation decides to engage a rabbi and concludes on the first day of interviews (February 21, 2010).

1. **Completing the Application Forms:** After contacting the RPC, the synagogue will receive application forms appropriate to the position being listed. The application itself should be completed by the president or chairperson of the search committee, perhaps in consultation with other congregants. All documents should be completed electronically and submitted to the Placement office. It is in the congregation's best interest to submit these forms as soon as possible. Congregational literature, as well as information about the general community (e.g., Chamber of Commerce material) may be sent directly to the New York, Cincinnati and Los Angeles campuses for distribution to the members of the class.
2. Once received, applications will be posted on the Rabbinical Placement Commission website of the CCAR ([www.ccarnet.org](http://www.ccarnet.org)) and listed in the CCAR newsletter. A position remains posted and listed until it is filled.
3. A congregation that has an internship filled by a rabbinical student might find itself in the position to hire an Assistant Rabbi or Rabbi-Educator. In such a case, the congregation may enter placement and the student may apply for the position. The congregation also has the option of offering the position to the student before placement. The student may choose to accept the position or enter into placement. In such a case, the congregation and student must notify the placement director in writing of their decision by January 7, 2010.
4. **Receiving resumes:** Students inform the Rabbinical Program Director on their campus about the positions for which they wish to interview. HUC-JIR will forward the resumes of all interested candidates to the appropriate congregations on January 19, 2010. It is possible that some resumes may be received and sent to congregations after this date; all resumes will be sent by February 16, 2010.
5. **References:** Congregations are free to contact those references listed by the student from the beginning of the Preparatory Phase through the end of placement. Search committees should **not** contact HUC faculty members who are **not** listed by the student as a reference. Search committees should not contact the candidates themselves, nor should they respond if any contact is initiated by the candidates. There should be no contact between employees and members of a searching congregation and students, spouses or significant others either directly or indirectly regarding the interests or needs of their specific congregation.
6. **Arranging the interviews:** The chair of the search committee or the Senior Rabbi should contact the New York campus of HUC-JIR (where all on-campus interviews will be held this year) to confirm the number and names of representatives who will be participating in the interview (this is necessary for room assignments and for building security). Call Tracy Neale at (212) 824-2278 or email her at [tneale@huc.edu](mailto:tneale@huc.edu) with the information.

**II. The On-Campus Interview Phase: HUC-JIR New York, February 21-23, 2010**

- A. Introduction: This is the period during which interviews are conducted at HUC-JIR. Self-advocacy and information-gathering are restricted until the time of the student's on-campus interview. Once this interview has taken place, contacts between students and congregations are not restricted except in one way: **students and congregations may not discuss or intimate their intentions regarding on-site interviews or their prioritized lists.**
- B. Dates and Times of Interviews: The interviews this year will be held ONLY on the New York campus, and will extend from 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, February 21, 2010 until the evening of Tuesday, February 23, 2010. Congregations and students are expected to be available for interviews throughout this period. Every interested student will be granted an interview. Interviews will last 40 minutes, allowing some time between interviews for deliberation or relaxation. Students from the Cincinnati and Los Angeles campuses will be in New York for this on-campus phase.
- C. Content of the On-Campus Interview: Interviews should be seen by both parties as an opportunity not only to impress each other, but to get to know each other. Each party will be tempted to stress strengths and overlook weaknesses. It is essential for each to risk being honest with the other. Candidates should not be asked questions relating to physical appearance, sexual preference, marital or family status.
- D. HUC-JIR in New York will provide suitable private interview locations for each congregation in placement. Also, breakfast, lunch, snacks, and refreshments will be provided for all visiting rabbis and committee members. A light dinner will be provided for those with evening interviews. The food will be kosher and vegetarian options will be available. Congregations will also receive information about hotels, restaurants in the area, etc.

**III. The On-Site Interview Phase:** begins on Thursday, February 25 and concludes on Tuesday, March 23, 2010. (No interviews are to take place during the CCAR convention, March 7 – 10; extra days have been built into the On-Site Interview Phase to include that hiatus.)

- A. Selecting candidates for on-site interviews: The search committee, guided by those members who conducted the campus interviews, decides which candidates it will invite to the community for a second interview. Please note that once an invitation has been extended, it may not be withdrawn. Similarly, if a student accepts the invitation, he or she must follow through with the on-site interview.
- B. Offers of on-site interviews are to be extended on Thursday, February 25, 2010 only from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon Eastern Time. Students will **not** respond to offers extended during these phone calls. Students **will** respond to all offers **between 12:00 noon and 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time. After 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time**, congregations may again extend offers. Students may respond to these offers immediately.
- C. **No offers of employment may be made during this period. Candidates should not be expected to travel on Shabbat and congregations should be sensitive to and accommodating of students' dietary needs.**
- D. Planning a travel itinerary: Students will arrange flights and travel times, considering the schedule of the congregations involved. It is important that congregations reimburse students for travel expenses in a timely manner.
- E. Inviting the Spouse or Significant Other: It is customary to invite a candidate's spouse or significant other to accompany the candidate on a congregational visit, since he or she will be involved in making choices. If the congregation extends this invitation, then the

congregation is assumed to be responsible for the expenses of the spouse or significant other as well as the candidate. The spouse or significant other, however, is not to be interviewed, unless he or she is formally applying for a position within the congregation. While the candidate is in the community, the significant other might appreciate being put in touch with resource people for information on jobs, housing and cultural life.

Congregations should be aware that some spouses and significant others are themselves placement candidates in the community. No undue pressure by the congregation, its affiliates, or its members may be placed upon the spouse or significant other to accept or to decline any job offer.

- F. The content of the on-site interview: congregations and students should discuss, in advance, what will be scheduled in the on-site interview.
1. Suggested areas of exploration: Search committees and candidates may find it useful to explore some of the following areas: theology, religious practice, social issues, particular interests for the congregation or the candidate, programs they would like to establish, and past experiences.
  2. Meetings: In addition to meeting with the search committee and the professional staff, many congregations use the on-site interview to allow various constituencies within the congregation to meet the candidate. Visits with youth groups, religious school committees, adult learners, and other congregational committees and auxiliary groups are all appropriate.
  3. Activities: The itinerary of an on-site interview should be designed to best promote the process by which congregations and candidates evaluate each other. Care should be taken to prepare a worthwhile informative visit that does not overburden either the representatives of the congregation or the candidate. Congregations and students, by mutual consent, may decide in advance of a candidate's arrival, to include in the on-site visit some activities in addition to individual and panel interviews. These activities should be limited in duration and in a natural and authentic setting. Such activities may include *divrei Torah*, invocations and benedictions at board meetings and brief teaching opportunities. **Students may not be asked to deliver sample sermons, lead services, preach on Shabbat, or participate in mock counseling sessions.** Please note that these additional activities should not constitute the bulk of the on-site visit and that students must be given adequate advance notice concerning any of the above activities.
  4. Photographs and videotapes: The use of photographs and videotapes of the student is not permitted at any time during the interview process.
  5. Job Discrimination: Students possess a wide variety of strengths, styles, experiences, and visions. These factors should determine which candidate would be best suited for a given congregation. It is unacceptable (and illegal in most cases) to discriminate on the basis of a candidate's gender, marital status, current or future family status, sexual orientation, or age.
  6. Financial Arrangements: It is understood that when a congregation seeks to engage a rabbi, a fair salary and benefits package will be offered. The disclosure and discussion of the specific salary and benefits should occur no later than the time that the student is visiting the congregation for a second interview. The candidates must have sufficient information to enable them to indicate their preferences in the matching system. Congregations and students should discuss openly all employment information including, but not limited to: health insurance for the rabbi's family,

vacation, retirement, other benefits, and any other concerns of either party that may be part of an employment agreement. (See Appendix A on p. 17.)

7. Job description: The student should not leave the on-site interview without a clear understanding of the job description and responsibilities.

#### **IV. Matching Phase: March 24 -25, 2010**

A. Double-blind Match Philosophy: A committee of rabbis, lay-leaders, and HUC-JIR faculty, students and administrators recommended the double-blind match system beginning with the Class of 1997. The double-blind match system protects the privacy of congregations' and students' preferences and therefore allows congregations and students to begin their relationships on the basis of mutual respect and dignity.

#### **B. Double-blind Match Ethics**

1. Direct Contact: Following the on-site visit and prior to their submission of ranking lists, students may not contact anyone associated with a congregation in order to elicit congregational preferences. Following the on-site visit and prior to their submission of ranking lists, those associated with a congregation may not contact students in order to elicit their preferences except to clarify issues raised in the interview, ask follow up questions, etc.
2. Indirect Contact: During this period, students and congregations may not use a third party to negotiate or relay information on their behalf. Third parties include, but are not limited to: HUC-JIR students, alumni, faculty members, administrators, and listed references.
3. Response: If congregations or students should receive such propositions as mentioned above in B.1. and B.2., they must graciously refuse to inform the initiator of their preferences or intentions. An appropriate response to such a situation is: "I appreciate your interest. However, the guidelines which govern the placement process do not permit me to discuss my preferences or intentions outside of the standard placement process."

#### **C. Double-blind Match Procedures**

1. Prioritized lists: Each congregation will create a prioritized list of students. This list is tantamount to an agreement on the part of the congregation to engage any student who matches with the invitation from that congregation. For this reason, great care should be taken in drawing up this final list. Similarly, each student will create a prioritized list of congregations, also tantamount to an agreement to serve any congregation which matches with him/her. Should either a congregation or a student determine after interviewing that no match appears to be suitable; the option is available not to submit a list at all. If a congregation or student chooses not to submit a list, that congregation or student will not be matched, and may continue to participate in the placement process by working with the Rabbinical Placement office.

2. Submission of lists: Students and congregations will submit their prioritized lists to HUC-JIR *no later than* 12:00 noon (Eastern Time) on March 24, 2010. These are to be faxed or emailed to **all three** stateside campuses:

513-221-0321 (Cincinnati) or [kkanter@huc.edu](mailto:kkanter@huc.edu) **AND**  
 815-550-1377 (New York) or [Raltman@huc.edu](mailto:Raltman@huc.edu) **AND**  
 213-749-3445 (Los Angeles) or [deweisberg@huc.edu](mailto:deweisberg@huc.edu).

3. Matching process: The matching process, supervised by HUC-JIR and the RPC, will occur on March 24, 2010 after 12:00 noon (Eastern Time). No lists or changes will be accepted after that deadline. The Rabbinical Program Directors on each campus will match congregational and student lists, keeping the lists strictly confidential. The first round of matches will consist of those congregations and students who ranked one another first choice. For example, if Congregation A ranks student 5 as its "first choice" and student 5 ranks Congregation A his/her "first choice," then Congregation A and student 5 are matched. After all these "first choice" matches have been made, matched congregations and students will be removed from remaining lists and rankings adjusted accordingly. Then remaining lists will be matched on an adjusted first choice basis.

The matching process models the offering and acceptance of positions on the open market. For that reason, if cases come up in the matching process where students and congregations cross-list one another, student preference will determine the outcome. The following example shows how this works:

C1 and C2 are congregations. Sa and Sb are students. They submit the following placement lists:

	First Choice	Second Choice
Sa	C1	C2
Sb	C2	C1
C1	Sb	Sa
C2	Sa	Sb

Because student preference will determine the outcome and no 1-to-1 match is possible, the results will be:

Sa matched with C1  
 Sb matched with C2

This is the only sort of case where student preference is directly determinative of outcome. Otherwise, the combination of student and congregation preference is considered to make matches.

4. Notification: On March 25, 2010, the Directors of the Rabbinical Program on each campus will notify congregations and students of their matches. Congregations will then call students by 5:00 PM Eastern Time to welcome them and begin planning for the future.

- D. It is often the case that a small number of congregations and students do not match as a result of this placement process. Congregations should call the Office of Rabbinical Placement (212-972-3636 x 233) who will continue to work with the congregation to find a match. It is our experience that some of the most successful placements are made at this time.
- E. Congregations that successfully hire a rabbi through the student placement process are expected to share the travel costs of students from the Cincinnati and Los Angeles campuses participating in the initial interviews in New York, February 21-23, 2010. These costs are in lieu of those that would have been incurred were congregational search committees to fly to all three campuses to conduct interviews (this had been the practice before interviewing was consolidated onto one campus). In general, these costs over the past few years have been in the \$800 range. Congregations will receive a bill for these expenses at the conclusion of the campus placement process from the Rabbinical Program Director on the NY campus.

Congregations that are not successful in hiring a rabbi through the student placement process are not expected to cover these costs.

## **V. Enforcement**

The goals stated in this handbook are intended to afford all candidates equal access to the available positions and to afford congregations equal access to the candidates. In light of these objectives, failure to uphold the guidelines contained in this booklet or their inherent spirit is viewed with *great concern* by all those who, in good faith, take part in this process. Any breach of these guidelines is subject to the rules and procedures for ethics complaints contained in the Code of Ethics for Rabbis adopted by the CCAR. (Available online at <http://ccarnet.org/code.html>). Any candidate or congregational search committee is encouraged to express concerns about possible violations immediately to a Rabbinical Program Director at HUC-JIR or the Interim Director of Rabbinical Placement.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Financial Arrangements

- A. Term of Election for Newly Ordained Rabbis: Newly ordained rabbis may be engaged as Assistant Rabbis for a period of three years with possible renewals. Some congregations limit the tenure of an Assistant Rabbi to three years. These congregations should make this known at the time of the placement process. However, from the viewpoint of the congregation, this limiting arrangement may not be advantageous. The first year of the three-year tenure is devoted in large measure to the rabbi becoming acquainted with congregants and gaining familiarity with rabbinic responsibilities and much of the third year will be devoted to securing another position. Thus it may prove beneficial to the congregation for an assistant to remain for five years. In addition, a rabbi who has had five years of experience has a better chance of finding a Category B congregation or even a Category C congregation. Newly ordained rabbis may therefore be attracted to congregations that will be open to their remaining in the position for five years after ordination.
- B. The Rabbi's Compensation and Benefits: The ideal of *Tzedek*, (justice, fairness, straightforwardness) should permeate negotiations between congregation and rabbi.
- C. An understanding of the complexities of synagogue finances and the realities of the newly ordained rabbi's fiscal concerns is of high importance to both the congregations and to newly ordained rabbis. **Congregations and students have free access to the latest salary survey published jointly by the offices of the URJ and CCAR.**
- D. Salaries must be figured in US Dollars. The valuation of benefits is not part of the salary figure. It is understandable that the precise definition of benefits will vary with locale. Benefits, as explained below, may include, but need not be limited to: full health care coverage for the rabbi and his/her family; social security co-payment; pension; disability insurance; parental leave; conference allowances, etc.
- E. Housing Allowance: If the congregation provides housing, the details of that arrangement shall be specified in writing. If the congregation does not provide housing, that portion of the rabbi's income used to house the rabbi and his/her family, plus all expenses pertaining thereto, shall be declared as Parsonage or Housing Allowance and so recorded in the minutes of the congregation in order to conform with the IRS regulations for tax exclusions (I.R.C. Section 107).
- F. Health Insurance, Disability, and Pension: Health coverage and major-medical insurance are regarded as among those fundamental obligations of a congregation to its rabbi and that rabbi's family. Family is defined as spouse/life partner and any legal dependents. The health plan should include comprehensive in-patient/out-patient hospitalization, comprehensive medical and major medical coverage, as well as appropriate dental, vision, mental health and pregnancy coverage.

- G. The congregation and the rabbi should participate in the Reform Pension Plan, administered by the Reform Pension Board of the URJ-CCAR. This plan includes group life insurance to provide for the rabbi's dependents. The Reform Pension Program requires the congregation to pay 15% of the rabbi's annual salary into the Fund each year. The rabbi makes a yearly contribution as well.
- H. The Reform Pension Board offers long-term disability insurance that provides benefits after a waiting period of six months. During this time the congregation is obligated to continue the rabbi's salary and benefits.
- I. Conference Allowances: Congregations benefit from granting the rabbi time and funds for attending conferences held under the auspices of the CCAR, URJ, NATE, WRN and WUPJ.
- J. Moving Expenses: On electing a new rabbi, the congregation provides a realistic moving allowance for the rabbi's family and possessions to their community. Some congregations also choose to include trips made prior to moving to allow the rabbi to set up housing, schooling, and other necessary arrangements.
- K. Parental Leave: Given Judaism's traditional commitment to the family, congregations should gladly support the decision of rabbis to raise a family. Fathers, as well as mothers, should be afforded every opportunity to devote themselves to parenting. Therefore, congregations should grant at least a two-month parental leave at full pay for their rabbis. Parental leave should apply to all rabbis regardless of marital status, gender, or sexual orientation. This applies to adoptive parents as well. We ask for sensitivity to various family structures and special needs cases.
- L. Time: The rabbi is entitled to at least one free day each week and to a paid vacation of at least one month during each year of service to the congregation. Time spent on the staff of URJ congregations, camps or conclaves, at professional conferences, in leading trips to Israel or on other congregational trips shall not be counted against annual vacation time.
- M. Letter of Intent: The Placement Commission recommends the composition of a letter of intent following the matching component of the Placement Process. This letter should come from the President or another qualified officer of the congregation, addressed to the soon-to-be-ordained rabbi, and should confirm the specifics of salary and benefits to which the congregation has agreed. The letter of intent should cover all categories of salary and benefits outlined above, and should specify the dates when these terms of contract will be in effect.
- N. It should be understood that all parties will be guided by Guidelines For Rabbinical Congregational Relationships, adopted by the Union for Reform Judaism and the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

When the student has countersigned or otherwise indicated acceptance of these terms, a copy of this letter should be: 1) Filed with the Minutes of the Board of Trustees, and 2) Given to the newly engaged rabbi. Your URJ Union Rabbi will gladly offer guidance on re-evaluating your congregation's finances, should that be necessary in order to engage a rabbi.

## Appendix B: Preference Sheets

# Congregation Student Placement Preference Sheet

Please print or type your selections on the page below. By signing, dating and submitting this form, you agree to accept any of the listed students who match you, according to the procedures established by Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and the Rabbinical Placement Commission. Return this form by fax or email to **all three** stateside campuses:

Rabbi Renni Altman (815-550-1377) ([raltman@huc.edu](mailto:raltman@huc.edu)) and  
Rabbi Ken Kanter (513-221-0321) ([kkanter@huc.edu](mailto:kkanter@huc.edu)) and  
Dr. Dvora Weisberg (213) 765-3445) ([deweisberg@huc.edu](mailto:deweisberg@huc.edu))

This form is due by fax or email no **later than 12:00 PM/noon Eastern Time on Wednesday, March 24, 2010.**

Congregation \_\_\_\_\_ City and State \_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
(where you can be reached on March 24)

<u>Number</u>	<u>Name of Student</u>
1	_____
2	_____
3	_____
4	_____
5	_____
6	_____
7	_____
8	_____
9	_____
10	_____

# Student Senior Placement Preference Sheet

Please print or type your selections on the page below. By signing, dating and submitting this form, you agree to accept any of the listed congregations that match you, according to the procedures established by Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and the Rabbinical Placement Commission. Return this form by fax or email to **all three** stateside campuses:

Rabbi Renni Altman (815-550-1377) ([raltman@huc.edu](mailto:raltman@huc.edu)) and  
 Rabbi Ken Kanter (513-221-0321) ([kkanter@huc.edu](mailto:kkanter@huc.edu)) and  
 Dr. Dvora Weisberg (213) 765-3445) ([deweisberg@huc.edu](mailto:deweisberg@huc.edu))

This form is due by fax or email **no later than 12:00 noon Eastern Time on Wednesday, March 24, 2010.**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Campus \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
(where you can be reached on March 24)

<u>Number</u>	<u>Name of Congregation</u>	<u>City and State</u>
1	_____	_____
2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____
4	_____	_____
5	_____	_____
6	_____	_____
7	_____	_____
8	_____	_____
9	_____	_____
10	_____	_____

## Appendix C: SUMMARY CHECKLIST

ASAP	<p>Congregations: Notify the RPC of the opening. Appoint a Search Committee. Complete and return the application. Send materials on your congregation and community to Cincinnati, Los Angeles and New York campuses.</p> <p>Students: Prepare résumés, personal statements and portfolios</p>
After January 1, 2009	Los Angeles and Cincinnati students make travel arrangements.
January 7, 2010	Deadline for Congregations to apply for 2010 Placement
January 14, 2010	Student lists of congregations, resumes and references due to Rabbinical Program Directors.
January 19, 2010	Resumes e-mailed to congregations.
After congregations receive resumes (or sooner if you prefer)	Congregations should make travel arrangements to come to New York and notify Tracy Neale ( <a href="mailto:tneale@huc.edu">tneale@huc.edu</a> ) of the names of those who will be coming to conduct the interviews.
February 21-23, 2010	On-campus interviews with candidates. Congregations & students are expected to be available any time between 9:00AM on Sunday and 9:00 PM on Tuesday for interviews. No offers may be made. ( See p.7 and 13 for a detailed explanation of the call back process.)
February 25, 2010	Callbacks for congregational visits beginning 10:00AM Eastern Time. Still no offers!
February 26 – March 23, 2010	Visits to congregations. No on-site visits are to be held during the CCAR Convention, March 7 – 10, 2010.
March 24, 2010	<p>Prioritized lists are faxed or emailed to <b>all three</b> campuses no later than 12:00/noon PM Eastern Time</p> <p><b><u>Cincinnati</u></b> - 513-221-0321  <b>Rabbi Ken Kanter</b> (<a href="mailto:kkanter@huc.edu">kkanter@huc.edu</a>) <b>and</b>  <b><u>New York</u></b> - 815-550-1377  <b>Rabbi Renni Altman</b> (<a href="mailto:raltman@huc.edu">raltman@huc.edu</a>) <b>and</b>  <b><u>Los Angeles</u></b> - 213-749-3445  <b>Dr. Dvora Weisberg</b> (<a href="mailto:deweisberg@huc.edu">deweisberg@huc.edu</a>)</p>
March 25, 2010	<p>Matching of Congregations and Students.</p> <p>Congregations and Students notified of results in the morning. Congregations should call their new rabbis to welcome them. Congregations and students not matched should contact the Rabbinical Placement office for continuation of the search process.</p>
March - April 2010	Only those congregations that have hired a student through the placement process will be billed for their contribution to the travel costs of bringing students to the New York campus.