

## 2019 National Havurah Committee Course Proposal FAQs

*Am I eligible to apply to teach a course?*

Most likely, yes! We believe and practice that everyone is both a teacher and a student. You don't need to be a rabbi, or a professor, or have any specific background to teach - you need to show strong planning and depth of knowledge in your proposal. On the course proposal form, you'll have space to provide details of what you plan to cover during the four sessions. Many NHC community members come to Institute for the first time as a teacher. The Course Committee aims to select courses taught by a diverse group of teachers, including a mix of those who have taught at NHC events in the past and those who are new (or relatively new) to the NHC. To support such a mix, those who have taught courses at the last 3 consecutive Institutes are not eligible to apply this year.

We are particularly eager to learn from and with people with identities and Jewish experiences that have been under-represented among our teaching ranks in the past, including Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews, People of Color, trans and genderqueer people, and people who are disabled. If you have any questions about equity and inclusion, please contact [Rebecca Ennen](#) or [the Course Committee](#).

*What makes a good course proposal?*

Propose a course you're passionate about; make it something unique that you're likely not going to find anywhere else. We encourage you to propose topics that you have found to be of special interest in your local *havurot*, *minyanim*, or other learning contexts. Please provide details of what you plan to cover during the four sessions, including how the students will be engaged in the course. Tell us about your vision – What are you doing? What are the students doing? At Summer Institute, every student is a teacher and every teacher is a student, and we want to know about the structure you will build for that shared learning.

As a guide, you may wish to view these proposals from [Liora Halperin](#), [Marisa Harford](#), and [Noam Sienna](#), all accepted in 2015 and 2016, to get a sense of the depth and detail that the Course Committee expects. You may also wish to view the [descriptions of courses](#) offered at last year's Institute. To request a conversation with a member of the course committee before submitting your application, contact us at [courses@havurah.org](mailto:courses@havurah.org).

*What is the basic structure for Summer Institute courses?*

Most courses will meet for a 1½ -hour session each day from Tuesday, July 30 - Friday, August 2, either in the morning or the afternoon. The Course Committee will consider proposals for courses that will meet in an extended format of four 2½-hour sessions, occupying the adjacent morning or afternoon workshop time slot. This format may be appropriate for courses that involve intensive individual or group work. If you wish your proposal to be considered for extended format, please indicate this and explain why when you complete the course

submission form; we also need to know whether and how you would teach the course in the regular format.

Teachers should expect a diverse group of students with differing viewpoints, and should be open to lively discussion in an environment that promotes openness and mutual respect. Course enrollment is generally capped at twenty to ensure a participatory atmosphere. Participants select their courses when they register for the Institute. Teachers receive a class roster in advance of Summer Institute, though roster changes are likely to occur once on-site.

*On what topic should I propose a course?*

Courses can be on any Jewish subject or theme: text study, religious life, spirituality, contemporary issues, history, literature, art, music, personal growth, meditation, or whatever someone dreams up. Again, last year's course descriptions can be found [here](#). However, many long-time Institute attendees will tell you that it's not really the topic that makes a good course; it's the teacher's ability to engage the students in the exploration of a topic that the teacher finds compelling and exciting.

Courses may not be not restricted by gender, age, religious practice, or ideology. Some courses may require specific background (such as Hebrew reading skills, previous experience studying Jewish texts, or the ability to read music); please describe the expectations clearly in your application. Proposals to teach specific liturgical skills (e.g. reading from the Torah) are not generally accepted.

*What level of text study background can I assume for a text-based course?*

Text-study courses are divided into three categories:

Advanced Text courses usually require experience with traditional text study and ability to read texts in their original language (usually Hebrew and/or Aramaic), and they may presume familiarity with other source material.

Intermediate Text courses assume some familiarity with traditional text study but don't require participants to work independently in Hebrew/Aramaic. These courses generally provide texts in translation but may also refer to the original languages.

Text for Everyone courses provide all sources in translation and do not assume any previous experience with text study.

*Do I have to pay to attend Institute if I am teaching a course?*

NHC is taking a new approach to compensation for course teachers this year. As background, most adult NHC attendees are asked to contribute between \$700-\$1350 (with a baseline price of \$1050) toward the site (including room and board), staff, and other costs of running Institute.

In recognition of the work teachers put into their courses and to ensure anyone invited to teach is able to afford to do so, this year, we are asking teachers to contribute financially according to a broader sliding scale, from \$0-\$1350. Teachers can decide for themselves how much they want to contribute toward the costs of participation. We encourage teachers to contribute financially to the extent they feel appropriate given their circumstances. Please note that any amount teachers contribute as tuition will be considered a tax-deductible donation. Teachers will need to cover costs of travel to and from Hartford, plus any single-room supplements, extra fees for special services, etc. However, teachers can apply for a travel grant, and we prioritize making the Summer Institute financially accessible to all, including teachers. Teachers must also pay NHC membership dues of \$40 per adult or \$80 per family.

*Can I co-teach a course with someone else?*

Sure! If you and another person are proposing to co-teach a course, please submit a single online course proposal with the information for both teachers. Just note that if you are co-teaching a course with another person, the sliding scale for each of you will be \$350-\$1350.

*Can I get financial support for art supplies?*

For courses in which the teacher must purchase art supplies, you may request a nominal materials fee. The fee you anticipate requesting must be noted in your course proposal submission.

*What is the policy on photocopies?*

Teachers are responsible for providing their own photocopies of course materials. You are welcome to email the course participants in advance so that they can either print their own materials or use digital devices, but you should still provide at least some copies. There is a print shop on the University of Hartford campus that teachers may be able to use, at their own cost.

*How do I submit a course proposal?*

Please submit your course proposal online: <https://form.jotform.com/83208232622146>

Please contact us by email at [courses@havurah.org](mailto:courses@havurah.org) if you would like to discuss a specific course idea or have questions about submitting your proposal online. Thanks for submitting your course proposal as soon as you can.

*How many course proposals can I submit?*

You may submit up to two course proposals for consideration. Please complete the online form in its entirety for each course you are submitting.

*When will I be notified if my course was accepted?*

The Course Committee will notify you of the status of your proposal by February 18, 2019. Teachers of accepted courses will be asked at that time to confirm their participation in the 2019 Institute.

The Course Committee generally accepts 24 courses and 4 alternates, just in case we need to replace a course because, when asked to confirm, a selected teacher is no longer able to attend the Institute. In recent years, we have received over 50 course proposals, so we regret that we cannot accept them all. Should your class not fit into this year's mix, we may suggest that you resubmit the course for a future Institute, or offer a scaled-down version as a workshop. We appreciate your understanding that not all proposed courses can fit into a given year's program.

*What are other ways that I can teach at Institute?*

Anyone attending the Summer Institute is welcome to teach a one-hour workshop on any relevant topic. You can lead a late-night activity, such as teaching your favorite dance form or how to play a great new board game. (Signup is available during registration.) Once in West Hartford, you can post a notice to let people know that you have something to share and when and where you will do so, or you can teach a folk song or *niggun* (wordless melody) during group singing experiences. There will also be additional opportunities to apply to be a formal teacher in the role of Liturgist-in-Residence, Timbrel Artist-in-Residence, or Hollander Social Justice Fellow. Contact the NHC Programs Director, [Hannah Hurwitz](#), for more information.