

REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM
For Reaffirmation of Accreditation

To: Academy of Jewish Religion California

April 14-17, 2018

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). The formal action concerning the institution's status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. This report and the Commission letter are made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.

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I. SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of the Institution and its Accreditation History

The Mission of AJRCA is:

The Academy for Jewish Religion California is a transdenominational institution dedicated to the training of rabbis, cantors, chaplains, and other Jewish community leaders. Its mission is to develop religious leaders steeped in Torah wisdom and tradition and capable of transforming Jewish communities into places where all Jews can grow toward spiritual wholeness and well-being.

It is the Academy's intent to graduate Jewish leaders who will serve as agents of transformation wherever they work by promoting genuine concern for the joys and pains of all people, dedication to moral living, and commitment to viewing Torah as foundational for human wisdom and spiritual practice.

The Academy for Jewish Religion California (AJRCA) was founded in 2000 as a transdenominational institution dedicated to the training of rabbis, cantors, chaplains, and other Jewish community leaders. Its founders recognized an urgent need to educate a kind of Jewish spiritual leader who is equipped to serve the diverse 21st century American Jewish communities, transforming them into places where all Jews can grow toward spiritual wholeness and well-being.

The Academy has three professional programs, which provide highly specialized programs of training and master's degrees leading to ordination as Rabbi with a degree in Rabbinic Studies, ordination as Cantor with a degree in Jewish Sacred Music and certification in Jewish Chaplaincy with a degree in Jewish Studies. Additionally, there are five other concentrations in the Jewish Studies degree for students who are interested in Jewish community leadership but do

not wish to become clergy or chaplains. The length of the program of study for Rabbinical and Cantorial programs is five years of full-time study whereas the Jewish Studies program is three years of full-time study for Chaplaincy and two years of full-time study for community leadership specializations.

As of the fall 2017, AJRCA had a total enrollment of 52 (unduplicated headcount) but only 22% were full time students, yielding an FTE enrollment of 37 students. AJRCA classifies its faculty as adjunct, core or administrative faculty, with the latter two carrying faculty governance responsibilities. Currently they have 23 adjunct faculty, 10 core faculty and 5 administrative faculty on staff.

AJRCA applied for and received WSCUC initial accreditation in February of 2013, while located at the Yitzhak Rabin Hillel Center for Jewish life on the campus of UCLA. They relocated their campus to the Wilshire/Vermont area of Los Angeles in the 2013-14 academic year and remained there until moving back to the Hillel Center at UCLA in the fall of 2017, under more favorable financial terms. This report represents the work of the first reaffirmation of accreditation visit for AJRCA.

B. Description of Team's Review Process

The team was constituted in October of 2016, received the AJRCA institutional report in August of 2017 and had an organizational conference call in October of 2017, making team member assignments in preparation for the Offsite Review (OSR) on November 28-29, 2017. The team came prepared for the OSR and presented and discussed preliminary observations from each of the assigned areas of the report. Over the course of the two days, the team honed in on the specific lines of inquiry that would be used during the onsite AJRCA visit. After a video

AJRCA Accreditation Visit Team Report, Spring 2018

conference meeting with officials from AJRCA, the team drafted the Summary Lines of Inquiry Report for AJRCA and identified additional information to be requested prior to the onsite visit. A response to the Lines of Inquiry Report, along with additional requested documentation was received February 2, 2018. The team reviewed this information in preparation for the pre-site visit conference call (March 26, 2018) and a draft of the preliminary team report was written. Final discussion regarding the lines of inquiry and logistics of the onsite visit took place during the pre-visit conference call. The team convened for the onsite visit on Saturday evening, April 14th, 2018 and conducted its work over the next three days according to the schedule that had been developed. The following interviews of the appropriate personnel were conducted by one or more members of the team.

- CEO
- WSCUC Steering Committee
- Senior staff
- Assessment & IR
- CFO
- Program Review team
- Tech Support
- Admissions, Marketing, & Development
- Academic & Student Support
- Open meeting with Staff
- Open meeting with Faculty
- Open meeting with students
- Board of Trustees
- Enrollment Management Team

A list of commendations and recommendations was developed and shared with the AJRCA community at the team exit interview on April 17th, 2018. A near-final draft of the AJRCA Accreditation Team report was written prior to the team's departure from the onsite visit and edits were made via email over the following two weeks leading to the final draft of the team report.

C. Institution's Reaccreditation Report and Update: Quality and Rigor of the Report and Supporting Evidence

AJRCA's institutional report was well written and the process leading to the report appeared to involve the appropriate stakeholders including representatives from the faculty, board of trustees and administrative staff. The report addressed all areas required but focused in greater depth on those areas that had been identified in the last WSCUC Commission letter as needing further attention and development: financial stability and sustainability, and board governance. The report included appropriate supporting evidence in most areas and the ALO was responsive to all team requests for additional information. The greatest areas of strength in the report were:

1. a clear sense of ownership in the mission and a commitment to a holistic education for students
2. honest and transparent responses
3. a clear recognition of the main challenges faced by AJRCA and descriptions of attempts to address the financial health and future of the institution

The areas that were weakest in the report were:

1. clarity on how well the program assessment and review processes were understood and how they function to ensure educational effectiveness in a sustainable manner
2. lack of detail in marketing, fundraising and enrollment strategies to meet AJRCA's financial challenges

II. SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ESSAYS

A. Component 1: Response to previous Commission actions

The two main recommendations from the March, 2013 Commission letter informing AJRCA of its initial accreditation approval had to do with Board Governance (CFRs 1.6, 3.9 and Policy on Independent Governing Boards) and Financial Stability and Sustainability (CFR 3.4). With regards to Board Governance, while recognizing the presence of an active and engaged governing board, it was recommended that AJRCA review its operations against the WSCUC policy for “Independent Governing Boards” and to make any necessary adjustments. With regards to financial concerns, it was recommended that AJRCA give significant attention to strategies to enable attainment of enrollment targets and increase annual giving as a contingency against lower than expected enrollments.

AJRCA submitted a progress report in 2015 detailing the significant work regarding adjustments that brought their board of trustees into alignment with the WSCUC policy for independent governing boards. AJRCA also reported survey results that indicated the need to provide board development opportunities through better onboarding procedures for new board members, education regarding expectations for the appropriate functioning of the board committees and mechanisms to better engage the board in strategic planning to ensure institutional stability. The institutional report identified what was being done to appropriately address each of these areas, including a new onboarding orientation process and a semi-annual board retreat focusing on strategic planning and sustainability.

In the time since the original commission recommendation regarding enrollment was made, AJRCA has seen a concerning decline in its overall enrollments. AJRCA has clearly given analysis and thought to understand the factors that have led to this decline and have begun to put

strategies in place to reverse this trend and move towards the targets for a sustainable enrollment. One strategy being implemented is to expand the geographical reach to its programs by offering a hybrid low residency modality to students who join normal face to face classes via video conferencing. A similar strategy is being implemented by creating partnerships with other institutions whose students would benefit from some of the courses AJRCA offers. One partnership has developed with the Cantorial Interns of the Cantors Assembly (CICA) and in the fall of 2017 five CICA students were enrolled in a total of ten AJRCA courses via video conferencing. A similar partnership is currently being pursued with the ALEPH Rabbinic Program affiliated with Jewish Renewal.

The institutional report also addressed the efforts to increase annual giving through expanding the donor base. Targeting several potential donors, the board scheduled several parlor meetings in the Los Angeles area for 2017-18 that featured presentations by students, alumni, and the president, and music by cantorial students and alumni. Additionally, AJRCA reported the implementation of the Chai campaign, which seeks to build an increasing base of small donors who make recurring monthly donations to provide a regular and predictable source of additional income. The campaign has brought in 42 new donors to date and is currently providing about \$5,000/month to the institution. AJRCA is expanding this program to include alumni with a goal to increase revenue from this source to \$70-80,000 per year.

B. Component 2: Compliance with the Standards and Federal Requirements; Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

The team made use of the four standards as an organizing principle for its evaluation of the AJRCA self-study report.

Standard I: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives

The institution defines its purposes and establishes educational objectives aligned with its purposes and character. It has a clear and conscious sense of its essential values and character, its distinctive elements, its place in the higher education community, and its relationship to the society at large. Through its purposes and educational objectives, the institution dedicates itself to higher learning, the search for truth, and the dissemination of knowledge. The institution functions with integrity and autonomy.

AJRCA has devoted considerable time and effort to define its mission, purpose, and direction. From its website to its documentation, the commitments and values of the academy are evident. During the visit, the team found ample evidence that every stakeholder in the AJRCA community is aligned around common goals and committed to the academy's future. The mission and vision of the school is truly embodied in its members, and is not limited to their educational endeavors, but driven by their commitment to serving a critical need in the Jewish community and the broader society. The Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) provide a comprehensive framework for the three schools and academic programs. The complexity of the ILOs and the overlapping definitions of PLOs, however, require attention and simplification (see component 4) in order to more closely align with course-level outcomes and improve the specificity of the assessment protocols for each of the programs (CFRs 1.1, 1.2). Financial challenges have created significant pressure, to which the community has responded with commitment and dedication, demonstrating discipline and even sacrifice in order to meet financial restrictions. The team was concerned, however about the sustainability of this level of resource demands, particularly on key leadership roles. Given the dedication of key board members, lead faculty, and volunteers, AJRCA has demonstrated an ability to grow its advancement, but close attention will need to be placed on the continuation and sustainability of those efforts. With a strong need to enhance enrollment, AJRCA has placed considerable hopes

on the initial response to the introduction of the hybrid program. Inquiry numbers are encouraging, and provide the team sufficient confidence that the school has set achievable goals. However, both advancement and enrollment results will require close monitoring and improved tracking in order to match the institution's agility with the right information to make decisions. AJRCA has and will continue to benefit from its ability to align these efforts with strongly rooted core values (CFRs 1.1, 1.2). The success of these ventures will most certainly require a close and candid rapport between the various areas of leadership in the academy, particularly between academic and business officers. While the information available on both financial and enrollment trends seems to accurately reflect the academy's strengths and challenges, it is difficult to ascertain what success would look like in both of these areas. The leadership is to be commended for their ability to adjust expenses over the last couple of years to minimize deficits and adjust finances to available resources (CFR 1.7). Given the complexity of AJRCA, it is not evident what information to be attentive to, and creating a centralized dashboard may be helpful to navigate a challenging moment.

A new website clearly and compellingly conveys the new directions of the institution, its central values, and the distinctions and requirements of its various academic programs (CFR 1.1). While policies, admissions standards, and business practices are contained in the catalog, available on the website, they could be more easily available. The lack of a search feature on the website limits the access to this information (CFR 1.4). Institutional statements—as well as reporting from students, faculty, and staff—reveal that AJRCA is committed to the diversity of Jewish communities it seeks to serve both in its policies and its practice, and remains a vibrant progressive voice in promoting inclusion and individual dignity.

AJRCA engages faculty in a variety of ways. Regardless of faculty status, the academy appears to have promoted a culture of open inquiry and academic freedom (CFR 1.3). While the three-year review cycle of faculty is quite comprehensive, it is unclear how that assessment may take place in the intervening years (CFRs 1.3, 1.7).

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate compliance with Standard I.

Standard II: Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions

The institution achieves its institutional purposes and attains its educational objectives through the core functions of teaching and learning, scholarship and creative activity, and support for student learning and success. It demonstrates that these core functions are performed effectively and that they support one another in the institution's efforts to attain educational effectiveness.

Under Standard II the institution's self-review identified faculty quality, content of programs, length, rigor, and clearly defined mission as areas of strength, thereby requiring less attention at the time of the report (CFRs 2.1, 2.2). Faculty assessment of student learning outcomes (SLOs), theses, internships, and Clinical Pastoral Education are subject to comprehensive review (CFR2.3). Review of syllabi indicates inconsistency in SLOs at the course level (CFR 2.4). The team believed that the thirteen ILOs did not provide sufficient differentiation between degrees and recommends that AJRCA review and where necessary modify the use of learning outcomes to adequately align with the different degree programs (CFR 2.3, see component four).

As part of its self-review, AJRCA identified greater clarity in the use of rubrics and a consistent template as areas for improvement in line with the program reviews (CFR 2.4). The student-faculty ratio facilitates feedback and active involvement as a strength of the institution (CFR 2.5). The use of grading rubrics to ensure the levels of attainment and more consistent use

of SLOs need attention as does data on retention/graduation, and external evidence as reported by the institution (CFRs 2.6, 2.7). The team recommends that AJRCA implement an enrollment management model to integrate existing reports to better facilitate evidence-based decision making (CFRs 2.10, 3.7).

The Faculty Handbook sets out general expectations and policies for faculty and student research, faculty reviews, and hiring policies are reported as well developed. The team suggests that some work on clarity of expectations with regard to faculty development and accountability mapping would strengthen the overall institution (CFRs 2.8, 2.9).

The institution has identified the need to better standardize syllabi and summative student evaluation practices, as well as systematize student data records for ongoing quality assurance. The team agrees with this assessment, particularly as it relates to student learning and success (CFR 2.10). The team sought greater clarity on the co-curricular programs, although they appear to be in alignment with the academic goals. The team also noted that the institution could simplify the assessment schedule to provide greater focus on the programs and services, but extending the rotation to 5-8 years in line with WSCUC guidelines (CFRs 2.11, 2.12). Student support services and institution support for financial aid, internships and other services are appropriate to the needs of the students (CFRs 2.13, 2.14).

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate compliance with Standard II.

Standard III: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Sustainability

The institution sustains its operations and supports the achievement of its educational objectives through its investment in human, physical, fiscal, and information resources and through an appropriate and effective set of organizational and decision-making

structures. These key resources and organizational structures promote the achievement of institutional purposes and educational objectives and create a high quality environment for learning.

AJRCA completed the review of Standard III in a reflective way and the team found the organizational structures to be effective given the limited resources. The structures that are in place work well given the dedication and commitment of the board, administration, faculty and staff. The quality of the programs and student success is of paramount importance to AJRCA and this was communicated to the team in a consistent and compelling manner by all constituents, from students to the board.

A key consideration in determining the quality and sustainability of the organizational structures is an understanding of the ethos with which AJRCA was founded and is still embodied by the community today. The business model is designed to be flexible and responsive to changing circumstances. Revenue is, by design, intended to be derived from approximately 65% tuition and 35% fundraising. Expenses for instruction are flexible as faculty are paid for the courses taught and courses must have a minimum enrollment of four to begin. AJRCA has minimal fixed costs. This flexibility allows AJRCA to respond to the changing theological educational world quickly, nimbly and effectively (CFR 4.7). Feedback from students and faculty spoke to the enduring quality and continuing relevance of the AJRCA programs. AJRCA, however, has significant financial challenges that include a multi-year budget deficit, lower than expected enrollment trends, a developing fundraising capacity and extra costs associated with facilities and personnel changes. The challenges are discussed in detail in component seven.

Employee policies, practices and evaluations are in place (CFR 3.2) and the institution is committed to faculty and staff development (CFR 3.3). The board is well aware of its fiduciary duties and the treasurer meets with the CFO weekly to discuss cash flow trends. Shortages, when

identified, are addressed promptly. The board receives current enrollment projections, status and trends at each board meeting and to the extent shortfalls in enrollment goals are looking likely, actively inquiries into how the institution is adjusting its tactics to change the trajectory.

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate compliance with Standard III.

Standard IV: Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement

The institution conducts sustained, evidence-based, and participatory discussions about how effectively it is accomplishing its purposes and achieving its educational objectives. These activities inform both institutional planning and systematic evaluations of educational effectiveness. The results of institutional inquiry, research, and data collection are used to establish priorities at different levels of the institution and to revise institutional purposes, structures, and approaches to teaching, learning, and scholarly work.

AJRCA has sufficient quality assurance systems in place embedded in their annual program reviews and rate themselves highly in this area with perhaps some need of cross-training of staff. The team generally agrees that the faculty and staff are highly committed to quality assurance and have an adequate framework (curriculum and assessment committees, program review process) and institutional ethos in place (CFR 4.1). These processes are supported by data from Institutional Research, which all stakeholders affirmed as adequate to meet their needs (CFR 4.2). The team witnessed a community of dedicated faculty, staff, administrators and trustees who are committed to being a learning organization intent on providing quality educational experiences for students. Systems are designed to incorporate feedback from faculty, students, alumni and employers in the evaluation and modification of AJRCA's offerings. Multiple examples of input from all levels of stakeholders were given that fed information into annual assessment efforts that could bring about ongoing change

opportunities. Additionally, these inputs feed into the program review cycles for each program that consider strategic changes based on longitudinal data and dynamic contextual factors that may be relevant (CFRs 4.3, 4.5, 4.6). Possible changes to the curriculum or program delivery resulting from various assessment data were clearly funneled to and acted on by the appropriate faculty curriculum committees and deans, indicating a clear ownership of the curriculum and its delivery by the academic units (CFR 4.4).

While AJRCA has a limited set of specific programs that may not reflect the same type of pressures that a comprehensive university might face, it does have a primarily adult student market and face similar challenges that higher education adult markets exhibit. While the team is encouraged that the academy is pursuing hybrid delivery modalities, it is also concerned that AJRCA may not fully understand the requirements, ramifications and/or limitations of this strategy and its potential impact on their future direction and/or their current ethos. The fact that the institution is pursuing this at least demonstrates it is aware of the changing higher education context. Given the commitment to maintaining the AJRCA ethos and the strategic dependence upon the online/hybrid modality for enlarging the geographic reach of the institution for enrollment, the team recommends that AJRCA include in its comprehensive strategic plan a process for monitoring the effectiveness of the educational modalities in the fulfillment of its mission. (CFRs 4.6, 4.7)

The team's finding, which is subject to Commission review, is that the institution has provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate compliance with Standard IV.

C. Component 3: Degree Programs: Meaning, quality and integrity of degrees

AJRCA has a strong, clear sense of mission, purpose, and future direction. The institution also has a strong sense of its commitment as a transdenominational institution that brings together the wisdom of “disparate denominations, including the powerful ideas found in each ... but not being beholden to one particular denomination.” The understanding and alignment with this mission was clear and articulate in conversations with every stakeholder at AJRCA. A consistent and enthusiastic picture of the school’s mission and the way it is impacting both students and the communities they serve was presented by board, administration, faculty, staff, and students. The institutional report and the visit to campus captured AJRCA’s dedication to “develop religious leaders steeped in Torah wisdom and tradition and capable of transforming Jewish communities into places where all Jews can grow toward spiritual wholeness and well-being.” The team observed evidence of AJRCA’s personalized approach to education that values individual students’ gifts and experiences. That spirit was clearly evident in the team’s conversations with students, who spoke with considerable praise for the ways that the institution welcomes and honors a diverse community of learners (CFR 4.7). Similarly, the curriculum of the three schools stresses a commitment to holistic and transformative education (CFR 2.5). To ensure the integrity in its programs, AJRCA has developed an extensive set of ILOs that provide common threads for all programs (CFR 2.3). Greater attention needs to be given to the alignment, and simplification, of ILOs, PLOs, and individual course learning outcomes. While the current set of ILOs is comprehensive enough to cover the various programs, the differentiation in specific expected outcomes for each program is not evident in the way they are presented. More nuance is needed to clarify specific program outcome expectations, to ensure consistency across a diverse faculty that is engaged in various models, as well as with a more

disseminated student body as the hybrid program develops. More information concerning this is found below in component four.

Among the changes confronting the institution has been the decline of students pursuing careers in religious leadership as well as competition for placement from denominational schools. Accordingly, AJRCA is seeking to expand its offerings to serve a broader array of students and professions and delivery modality. While the various programs share a significant number of resources, sustaining the complexity of three schools will depend significantly on enrollment. Further, the strength of the programs will depend largely on more robust partnerships with external organizations, and recruitment efforts for these programs may well require helping prospective students see the vocational opportunities and benefits of the degrees beyond traditional full-time employment in congregational settings.

The meaning and quality of the degrees is regularly evaluated by AJRCA's leadership, being attentive both to the trends in peer schools as well as the changing needs of the communities they serve. On the website, the institutional reports, and in the review team's conversations with board, administration, faculty and students, there was a noteworthy consistency and the expression of core values and ethos (CFR 1.1).

The Master of Jewish Studies (MJS) degree, which is fairly new, requires additional attention. The assessment and review of this degree is not as clearly identifiable as it is for the other degree programs. In conversation with the administration, the team was glad to hear that a review of the program will be scheduled for 2021.

Efforts to ensure the "quality" of the programs will hinge on the continued improvement of its relatively young assessment endeavors. Most of the language used in the discussion of quality is aspirational in tone, drawn from the recent process of reformulating the curriculum. It will

need to be tested with fuller and more rigorous appraisals of student outcomes (CFR 2.5). As it looks to the future, its efforts to sustain quality, build financial support, and raise enrollment will require very aggressive efforts to continue to articulate the meaning and merits of an AJRCA education to a wider range of community partners, employers, and supporters (CFR 3.4). This is particularly important given AJRCA's commitment to a different educational model that does not rely on financial aid to attract students. In the current higher education environment, this is both a significant asset—having a model in place that already reflects a more sustainable approach than one that is reliant on constantly increasing demands for financial aid—as well as a liability as students become more sensitive to educational costs. Tracking student debt, graduate placement, etc. will be important indicators for articulating the value of the education.

The role of board members, as articulated in the strategic plan, is significant and commendable. The team felt that the board's genuine commitment was sufficient to ensure follow through on the work it takes on, even if board members are doing so on a volunteer basis. As the institution "comes of age," the energy and commitment of the initial founders will need to be intentionally stewarded towards a new generation. The team's experience with some of the new trustees gave confidence that these efforts are being made.

D. Component 4: Educational Quality: Student learning, core competencies, and standards of performance at graduation

AJRCA is a graduate institution that offers master's degrees in Rabbinical Studies, Jewish Sacred Music, and Jewish Studies. The curriculum for each of these degrees is patterned after similar programs in other Jewish seminaries but it is not governed by a specialized accreditation agency. AJRCA has identified 13 learning outcomes that they refer to as Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) that are based on the three pillars of Jewish life which are Torah (teachings),

Avodah (prayer and ceremonial life), and Gemilut Hasadim (acts of lovingkindness). In addition to the ILOs, the AJRCA faculty have identified six central middot, or “qualities of being,” which they expect to discern and nurture in students as they grow in self-awareness and Jewish practice. These include Anavah (humility), Rachamim (empathy), Kavod (respect), Pnimit (inwardness), Chesed (kindness), and Zerizut (initiative and enthusiasm). These “qualities of being” are assessed by faculty for each student in all of their courses.

AJRCA has a well-developed assessment culture with processes that incorporate elements of annual programmatic assessment with a 4-year program review cycle (see component six). It is clear that the assessment culture extends across faculty, administration and the board and provides opportunities for input from these stakeholders as well as from students, alumni and external professionals at internship sites (CFRs 2.7, 4.4, 4.5). The team was impressed with the dedication of their faculty and administrators to ensure the quality of their programs and the degree to which they listened to student inputs. Additionally, the team was impressed with the speed at which the institution could make appropriate changes to the curricular programs based on their assessment culture. Given the level of assessment that was observed and the few people who were in charge of the oversight of the process, the team was concerned about the long-term sustainability and scalability of this assessment culture before “assessment fatigue” would set in (CFRs 3.1, 3.2). While those participating in the work indicated the load was manageable, AJRCA may want to consider some modification to their practices that could lighten the load and help avoid assessment fatigue. One simple example may be to move their 4-year program review cycle to the 5-8 year cycle suggestion in the WSCUC Program Review Guide. They may also consider whether dividing their annual assessment work into 2 or 3 groupings could allow them to move to a multi-year assessment plan vs. an annual assessment plan. Ultimately, these

would be suggestions that while worth considering, should only be implemented if AJRCA felt that they were useful.

While it was very clear to the team that AJRCA faculty and administrators were using and assessing their ILOs in significant ways that led to programmatic improvements, it was difficult to distinguish between how learning outcomes were differentially used at course, program and institution levels (CFRs 2.3, 2.4). AJRCA used the language of ILOs both in their institutional report and during the on-site visit whether discussing learning and assessment at the course, program or institutional level. The team was used to seeing assessment structures that are hierarchical in organization with a few broad outcomes at the instructional level that every graduate of the institution would achieve (ILOs), more specific program learning outcomes (PLOs) that each graduate of a program achieves and that differentiate each program while aligning to the ILOs, and finally the most specific course learning outcomes (CLOs) that each participant in the class would achieve while aligning to both the PLOs for the program(s) served by the course and the ILOs. While this learning outcome structure is not required, it represents best practice in the higher education context and allows for the most precision in aligning the differences in granularity of learning outcome expectations that exist at the course, program and institution levels. The team's evaluation of course syllabi as well as conversations with faculty and administrators confirmed AJRCA's understanding that there were different student learning expectations for the same ILO when comparing students in different programs (i.e. Rabbinical students vs. Cantorial students) even though the language of the ILO was the same for both programs and individual courses. Some syllabi acknowledged the differing expectations based on program whereas others did not. For example, see the following excerpt from the Applied Social Theory in Spiritual Care course.

The Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO's) for these semesters include the following (added terms are inserted in parentheses and in an underlined format to further define the ILO's in terms of clinical education for chaplaincy).

ILO 3: Practical knowledge of *Jewish law and custom* (and interfaith laws and customs) as applied to the ritual calendar, life-cycle rituals, daily practices, dietary laws, personal relationships, and ethical practices in daily life. (And as applied to spiritual care and clinical interventions to serve within an across diverse populations with sensitivity.)

The team recognized this type of contextualization of the ILO as really representing a specific PLO for the Chaplaincy program that would be different from the expectations in the Rabbinical program, if the institution had created differential PLOs for each program. The team also recognized that the nesting of the AJRCA ILOs under the three pillars of Jewish life, Torah (teachings), Avodah (prayer and ceremonial life), and Gemilut Hasadim (acts of lovingkindness), resembled the assessment practice of aligning PLOs to higher level ILOs. This led the team to wonder if the three pillars actually reflect the institutions ILOs and the 13 "ILOs" might more appropriately resemble PLOs, albeit without programmatically discriminatory language.

Finally, while the team was confident that AJRCA was using data and input from their assessment process to make programmatic improvements, it was not clear if they were doing this based on collective anecdotal intuitions based on assessments of individual student's learning or on quantitative /qualitative evidence from aggregated data from individual student learning assessments. Aggregated data from student learning assessments allows for a more direct assessment of the program as a whole but in order to make this connection, the faculty/administration need to set and agree on the specific standards of performance that would meet their expectations for the PLOs associated with each program. The institution does report the raw aggregate results over time for each ILO by program in their institutional report (page 15-16), but they don't seem to identify what level of performance meets their expectation.

Without this one does not know whether or not to make zero programmatic changes based on the results because expectations are being met or to make dramatic programmatic changes because the results are far below expectations. The WSCUC expectation is that standards of performance will be in place for each learning outcome and that they will be set by those who have governance responsibility over the curricular programs (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6). If the standards of performance are set for each learning outcome at each level (course, program, institution), one can use aggregate assessment data to assess the effectiveness of a particular course at helping students achieve that CLO, or likewise a particular program at achieving a particular PLO or ILO. Standards of performance usually take the form of X% of students will achieve Y level of success, with X and Y being set at a place the faculty/administration feel demonstrate the quality expectations they would be satisfied with. Using their own results, would those overseeing the Cantorial program be satisfied with the below results from the 2015-17 Cantorial alumni regarding ILO 4? It is difficult to tell as only those familiar with the program and its expectations would have the context to tell, which is why they would be the ones to set the standards of performance for their program.

ILO	Adequate or High Competence	High Competence
ILO #4 History	50%	19%

To clarify the relationship between the different levels of learning outcomes (institutional, program and course learning outcomes), the team recommends that AJRCA evaluate and if necessary, modify the student learning outcomes currently being assessed to ensure they appropriately distinguish between different degree programs. Additionally, the team recommends that AJRCA set appropriate

standards of performance for each learning outcome to strengthen programmatic assessment in addition to the assessment of student learning (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6).

In conclusion, the team was impressed by the institutional buy-in around assessment and the engaged culture that has developed. AJRCA has adequate quality assurance mechanisms in place with their annual assessment efforts and periodic program review and the team was confident that they were delivering quality programs that were informed by their assessment practices. There was some concern about the sustainability of the assessment work that was being done and whether it was scalable should they experience enrollment growth, but AJRCA can monitor that and make adjustments if needed.

E. Component 5: Student Success: Student learning, retention and graduation

Students and faculty at AJRCA form a community characterized by a remarkable sense of loyalty, adaptability, and commitment to one another's success. AJRCA's programs are subject to systematic review through regular and ongoing analysis of student achievement of its unusual number of institutional learning outcomes (CFR 2.7). Although this approach is not conventional, the administration, faculty and students are committed to measuring student success and discerning how to improve it through regular evaluations of course work, co-curricular requirements, internships, retention and graduation rates, alumni placements, alumni membership of professional associations (CFRs 1.2, 2.4, 2.6). While they are approaching this conversation to promote individual student success, they are still learning to bring their

conversations to bear on the overall program. As they move forward, this commitment to student success is likely to inform and be enhanced by better alignment of program and course outcomes.

Evidence that the institution is committed to improving student success can be found in two important innovations of (1) a hybrid distance learning program and (2) a student “angel” mentoring program, which show that results of assessment of student success are leading to important strategic conversations (CFR 2.13). While both innovations are the focus of ongoing conversation in the administration and among the faculty, especially in regards to the prudent use of institutional resources, the students expressed gratitude and satisfaction with the opportunities for success that these innovations opened up. In fact, the successes of many of the interns as well as the placements of recent graduates have bolstered the reputation of the school and are a source of pride among the faculty and confidence among the students.

The AJRCA assessment procedures for student learning, especially in terms of (1) their frequency, (2) the unusual number of ILO’s, and (3) limited number of administrators may present challenges in terms of long term sustainability (see component four for more details). Nonetheless, students express satisfaction, overall, with the quality of the learning and procedures are in place for ongoing assessment (CFR 2.3). Acutely aware of rapidly changing cultural trends in regards religion and spirituality, the administration and faculty have taken steps to respond to concerns of recent graduates. Specifically, leadership and managerial courses are being developed to better prepare students for new opportunities upon graduation. Of the three schools, the Cantorial School has the strongest and best job market for its graduates.

Although retention rates are considered normal when measured against similar institutions, nearly half the students do not complete their degrees. The institution has discovered that personal financial resources are often a factor. While personal finances are beyond the control of

the institution, AJRCA has found other ways to support students through creating a strong sense of community and the opportunity for working students to attend courses remotely. Where academic issues are a challenge to retention (CFR 4.1), the student “angel” mentorship program addressed this by pairing successful students with new students in an attempt to both improve student performance and to create a sense of community. The institution is committed to providing these alternative opportunities for community and connection among students and faculty as a growing number of students engage their course work remotely under the hybrid modality (CFR 2.3).

A majority of students are taking longer than the minimum time to complete their program of study; however, the institution believes that its five-year graduation rates are within a normal range when compared to peer institutions (CFR 1.2). Indeed, the diverse educational backgrounds of the students and the academic standards of the institution contribute to a lengthier program for many of the students. At the same time, because students are often transitioning between careers, the freedom to pursue studies at an individualized pace was positively highlighted by the students who met with the team.

F. Component 6: Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program review, assessment, use of data and evidence

The institution implemented a rigorous assessment requirement based on annual reviews of its degree programs with the exception on the MJS degree scheduled to be assessed in 2021. The timing of this program review is due to its nature as a composite degree drawing on the courses regularly assessed in other programs. The complete review of the degrees takes place on a four-

year cycle, however, the annual review of most of the curriculum appears to be more than is necessary, since they do not allow sufficient time to determine trends (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3).

The AJRCA degrees are benchmarked with other seminaries, e.g. both the Rabbinical School and Cantorial School are compared to other schools from various denominations. The curriculum seeks to provide an emphasis on current trends and the strong offering of Talmud, Tanakh, history, and studies appropriate to the particular degree (CFRs 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7).

The program reviews provide a basis for assessing students learning with regard to the ILOs. There is some uncertainty as to the role of ILOs (as mentioned previously in several sections) in relation of PLOs and SLOs for specific courses. It appears that the overall emphasis is on institution wide outcomes that are assessed by a cross section of faculty from all four programs. The team expressed concern that there may be too many ILOs and that the differentiation among degrees is diminished by the strong institutional emphasis (CFRs 2.2, 2.3). The team recommends that AJRCA evaluate and if necessary modify the statements to identify the relation of the learning outcomes to the degree programs (CFR 2.3).

The institutional assessment program provides data to inform decision-making and changes in the degree curriculum as well as the modalities of delivery based on enrollment. The data are also used for admission and retention. The use of these reports identified the impact of the move from full-time to part-time students as a significant factor in the declining enrollment and budget shortfall over the past six years. Costs of travel and accommodation impact the out-of-town cohorts, pushing the institution to pursue online, hybrid modalities, which gained WSCUC approval in winter 2018 (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6).

The curriculum reviews resulted in a number of improvements and changes to ensure greater student learning, addressing both areas needing improvement (e.g. Hebrew vocalization,

commitment to co-curricular requirements, and the summer trip to Israel) (CFRs 2.4, 2.8, 2.10, 2.11). The program reviews also found that internships and theses needed revision, which is being addressed (CFRs 2.6, 2.9).

Overall the institutional commitment to quality assurance and improvement appears to be highly developed. The greater concern is the relative short period between the completion of comprehensive program reviews and the current accreditation visit. It is difficult to know if the adjustments will achieve the highly developed level assumed in the program changes. Finally, the declining enrollment and increasing workload on the faculty and administration is a factor in the sustainability of the current program review cycle (CFRs 4.4, 4.5, 4.6).

G. Component 7: Sustainability: Financial viability, preparing for the changing higher education environment

From the outset AJRCA has been committed to moving beyond the traditions of Jewish theological education adopting instead a commitment to maintain a lean operation reaching out to the Jewish community in a transdenominational, creative approach. This includes adopting an alternative business model that resists the acquisition of property and pursuing endowments, focusing instead on tuition income and growing a broad support base of donors equally committed to the mission. AJRCA's eighteen-year history reflects this creative energy producing a remarkable degree of commitment to their mission among the board, administration, faculty, staff, students, and alumni. These vital yet intangible qualities make up the compelling reality of a committed community that is willing to do whatever it takes to fulfill their mission.

AJRCA was founded to provide an alternative to the traditional seminary model. This approach is bearing fruit in terms of the successful placement of their alumni. AJRCA, although financially challenged, is poised to be successful as the landscape of higher education changes,

particularly as it applies to organized religion. The difference between AJRCA and traditional institutions is the articulation of a compelling value proposition that attracts students who believe in the educational mission and outcomes and are willing to pay the tuition while forgoing any institutional aid in order to attend the school. AJRCA funds its operations with a mix of approximately 65% tuition revenue and 35% fundraising revenue. It has minimal fixed costs as courses need a minimum of four students enrolled in order to start and faculty are paid based on courses taught. Faculty are committed to the institution and while many teach at or are somehow affiliated with other institutions the team does not see that as a drawback but as a reflection of how the economy and society are evolving in terms of the changing world of work (often referred to as the Gig economy). In addition, AJRCA is more nimble than most educational institutions in moving quickly to address emerging educational trends. For example, many religious institutions are now implementing some form of entrepreneurial training; AJRCA began offering this training approximately five years ago.

While the business model is lean and responsive to changing circumstances, AJRCA has little in the way of financial reserves and a shortfall in enrollment or fundraising revenue would require an immediate reaction in terms of generating alternative revenues or reducing expenses. In AJRCA's 2017 audited financial statements, the auditors gave an unqualified opinion. However, they also noted their concern and the tenuous nature of AJRCA's financial situation by disclosing in the footnotes to the financial statements AJRCA's plan for remaining sustainable as an ongoing concern. The team noted that AJRCA is executing this plan and that the commitment to its success from the board, administration, faculty and staff remained extremely high.

AJRCA also understands that it must constantly monitor its operations to remain financially viable and secure its long-term sustainability. The strategic plan developed by

AJRCA lays out several initiatives that are helping it secure its financial outlook. Several of these initiatives have been or are currently being implemented.

AJRCA has depended greatly on the work and dedication of its current president who retired in 2013 then returned to serve as president again in 2015. Based on conversations during the visit, it appears that a presidential transition is likely again within a few years. This may be an impediment to accomplishing the strategic initiatives as a presidential succession is often a time of upheaval and uncertainty. As evidenced by the retirement and return of the current president, the presidential succession transition is an ongoing issue with AJRCA (CFRs 3.9, 3.8). Similarly, due to the low number of key administrators at AJRCA and the multiple roles that they fulfill, succession planning for all of the key leadership roles at AJRCA is important. In light of this, the team recommends that AJRCA include succession plans for strategic positions at the institution in their comprehensive strategic plan (CFR 4.6).

Based on the institutional report and accompanying materials, the team was concerned about the clarity of roles and responsibilities and whether there were proactive, transparent, internal communication practices at AJRCA as they are advisable to alleviate stresses and confusion amongst staff and faculty (CFRs 3.1, 3.2). The team was pleased to observe that despite many people holding several roles, there was clarity about roles and responsibilities. In the team's discussions with each constituency there was consistent agreement that communication had improved significantly over the last two years. The team enquired about examples of dissension on any major issues under consideration resulting from poor communication, but was assured that communication had indeed improved to the point of including the appropriate constituencies.

The AJRCA Chief Financial Officer (CFO), who appears to have primarily an oversight role, has made strides toward balancing the budget and expense control (CFRs 3.8, 3.4). AJRCA has a history of operating deficits and has little in the way of financial reserves. It has taken steps to mitigate its financial situation by addressing these shortfalls and proactively managing its cash flow with weekly meetings between the CFO and board treasurer. Expenses have been cut to match cash receipts with cash disbursements. The expectation also is that costs will decrease over the next year due to settlement of a personnel matter and ending periodic payments associated with a negotiated lease settlement from the institution's previous location. In addition, 2018-19 will not include specific WSCUC costs associated with reaffirmation, and there will be savings from continuing to share the job responsibilities of the Dean of the Rabbinic School amongst current staff, providing budget relief.

Enrollment is trending better than in previous years. Inquiries through April already equal the entire previous year (2017-2018) and new student enrollments at this point fully match attrition due to expected graduations. There are also another six to eight potential students who AJRCA is reasonably confident will enroll. Enrollment targets appear realistic and attainable, and progress toward meeting the goals is monitored on an ongoing basis by administration and board with tactical adjustments made as circumstances dictate.

AJRCA has moved twice in the past three years from its current location to downtown and back again. The team was initially concerned about the internal decision making that led to such abrupt changes. Through its discussions with the board and leadership it became clear that AJRCA did respond appropriately to changing circumstances, however, as part of a negotiated lease settlement AJRCA continues to pay \$53,000 per year for the downtown location. This obligation has one more year to run and will be fully paid in June 2019. Given the current lease

at UCLA Hillel is for two years (with options to renew), the team recommends that AJRCA develop a more comprehensive strategic plan that includes a process for determining the best location and cost of a facility to house the academy long term (CFR 3.7).

AJRCA recently hired a marketing consultant to help grow enrollment. The website has been improved and social media outreach has been enhanced. The cohesive marketing message and coordinated recruitment activities appear to be facilitating AJRCA's efforts to increase enrollment and help drive financial and institutional stability. AJRCA should consider developing a detailed marketing and enrollment plan and ensure the organizational structure and capacity are in place to coordinate the marketing, recruiting and admissions efforts to effectively execute the plan (CFRs 3.1, 3.7).

Development efforts in this fiscal year are on track to meet or exceed the \$400,000 goal. These efforts are being led by board members and volunteers and currently focused on four to six parlor meetings and the Chai campaign, which, given limited resources seems achievable. Additionally, alumni relationships can help with fundraising and enrollment, making enhanced alumni relationships and contributions a strategic goal.

Board governance was recently revamped to better comply with WSCUC guidelines. Each member of AJRCA's Board of Directors is expected to contribute financially; however, total funds received could be improved upon.

Defining the target market, implementing a coordinated marketing enrollment plan, refining development opportunities and pursuing other academic delivery models, such as the online hybrid model, while also developing alternative revenue streams will help address the forecast deficits and accelerate the time it takes to reach a more financially sustainable level of

operations. If the enrollment plans are not met, it will be extremely difficult for AJRCA to continue in its current form.

In light of the significant challenges facing the institution around financial viability discussed above, the team recommends that in order for AJRCA to ensure financial viability, it

- a. Continue to proactively monitor its cash flow, enrollment pipeline, fundraising programs and expenditure levels and take immediate steps to adjust expenditure levels if enrollment trends or fundraising program trends indicate an operating deficit is likely;
- b. Develop a multi-year financial plan with assumptions that shows AJRCA consistently achieving financial stability and a balanced budget; the plan should include specific, actionable advancement strategies, fundraising goals, and recruiting strategies.
- c. Create a contingency plan to be implemented upon realization of an operating deficit is likely to occur.

(CFRs 3.4, 3.7)

H. Component 9: Reflection and Plans for Improvement

A supporter of the Academy of Jewish Religion/CA provided a helpful description of the institution; it is small but mighty. From the outset AJRCA was committed to moving beyond the traditions of Jewish theological education adopting instead a commitment to maintain a lean approach reaching out to the Jewish community in a transdenominational, creative fashion. This includes adopting an alternative business model that resisted the acquisition of property and the pursuit of endowments, focusing instead on tuition income and growing a broad support base of donors equally committed to the mission. Their eighteen-year history reflects this creative energy producing a remarkable degree of commitment to their mission among the board, administration, faculty, staff, students, and alumni. These vital yet intangible qualities make up the compelling reality of a committed community that is willing to do whatever it takes to fulfill their mission.

AJRCA has a well-qualified faculty of scholars who are also actively involved as leaders in Jewish religious life. The students are equally capable leading to consistent placements of alumni in the leading religious and Jewish organizations in Los Angeles and nationally. AJRCA's academic program is rigorous and strong, operating with integrity across the curriculum. The team was impressed with the energy, discipline, passion, resourcefulness, and can-do attitudes of the various stakeholders.

The team has confidence in the leadership of the institution and was impressed with the commitment of the board, administration, faculty, and staff to immediately address the financial challenges that arose in the recent past. The senior leadership work well together as evidenced in their successful efforts to work through presidential transitions and campus moves within a short period of time. The team also has confidence in the ability of the leadership to address the current financial situation of the institution.

The challenges ahead for AJRCA are not inconsequential. The institution is facing multiple year deficits that required significant board action, including raising additional funds through increased commitment to development that was secured by loans from the board. The administration responded with a significant cut in expenditures, including staff and salary cuts. They also generated additional donations through creative outreach. While the sustainability of these efforts must be demonstrated, it is clear that together the AJRCA community is unified in its commitment to reduce the deficit and achieve a balanced budget.

The team recommendations center on the primary concerns for improvement: financial viability, a comprehensive strategic plan to account for the sustainability of the institution, improved integrative tracking of students, and clarification of learning outcomes for the four programs. The team agreed that while there were significant challenges facing AJRCA the abiding opinion is that AJRCA is a maturing institution with the will and potential to sustain a vibrant program for equipping rabbinic cantorial, chaplaincy, and community activists. The team encourages the leadership of AJRCA to continue to stay the course set by the president, board, and leadership team.

III. SECTION III –COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE TEAM REVIEW

Commendations

The team commends the institution for its:

1. Transdenominational approach, nimble structure, diverse faculty models, and individualized attention to students it serves;
2. Institutional mission that provides a model for others at a time of significant change in religious higher education;
3. Clear mission that is widely understood and embraced by AJRCA’s various stakeholders and that emphasizes contributions to the public good;
4. Demonstrated commitment to self-reflection, transparency, assessment and broad engagement of stakeholders;
5. Dedication and devotion of the board, administrators, faculty and staff to carry out the mission of AJRCA and to ensure a positive learning experience for students. .

Recommendations

The team recommends that AJRCA:

1. Ensure financial viability: (CFRs 3.4, 4.7)
 - a. Continue to proactively monitor cash flow, enrollment pipeline, fundraising efforts and expenditure levels and take immediate steps to adjust expenditure levels if enrollment or fundraising trends indicate an operating deficit is likely;
 - b. Develop a multi-year financial plan with assumptions that shows AJRCA consistently achieving financial stability and a balanced budget; the plan should include specific, actionable advancement strategies, fundraising goals, and recruiting strategies.
 - c. Create a contingency plan to be implemented upon realization that an operating deficit is likely to occur.
2. Develop a more comprehensive strategic plan that includes the following: (CFRs 3.7, 4.6, 4.7)

- a. A process for determining the best location and cost of a facility to house the institution;
 - b. Succession plans for strategic positions in the institution;
 - c. A process for monitoring the effectiveness of the educational modalities in the fulfillment of its mission.
3. Implement an enrollment management model to integrate the reports that track student trends of admissions, enrollment, financial aid, and degree completion. (CFRs 2.10, 3.7)
 4. To clarify the relationship between the different levels of learning outcomes (Institutional, Program and Course Learning Outcomes), evaluate and, if necessary, modify the student learning outcomes currently being assessed to ensure they appropriately distinguish among the different degree programs. Additionally, set appropriate standards of performance for each learning outcome. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6)

IV. APPENDICES

A. Federal Compliance Forms

1. Credit Hour Review

CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Where is the policy located? AJRCA Catalog (pages 53-54)
	Comments: https://ajrca.edu/students/academic-catalog/
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	The Curriculum Committee of the faculty reviews all syllabi for new courses and conducts a comprehensive syllabi review as part of the program review. In addition, there are annual syllabi reviews for each program and credit hour compliance checks are part of that process.
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

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	Comments: Courses meet for the prescribed number of hours or, when different, the syllabus indicates how any seat time shortfall will be accomplished through other means that qualify as “direct instruction”. The credit hour policy in the catalog also describes how credit hour requirements are met in different categories of courses, including those with “in class” instruction does not meet the full requirement.
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? 2 syllabi were reviewed
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? Hybrid
	What degree level(s)? Master’s
	What discipline(s)? Rabbinical School, Cantorial School
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Each syllabus indicated what hybrid activity accounted for any direct instruction shortfall.
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? 1 syllabus was reviewed
	What kinds of courses? Chaplaincy clinical course
	What degree level(s)? Master’s
	What discipline(s)? Chaplaincy
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: Combined instruction and clinical time exceeded the expected number of hours expected for 6 credit hours.
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? 4 programs
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? Rabbinical, Cantorial, Chaplaincy and Jewish Studies
	What degree level(s)? Master’s
	What discipline(s)? See above
	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: All programs complied with credit hour expectations and contained periodic routine mechanisms to ensure continued compliance.

Review Completed By: Kerry Fulcher
Date: 4-16-18

2. Marketing and Recruitment Review

MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's recruiting and admissions practices.

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.
**Federal regulations	<p>Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Comments: The recruitment process is outlined on the Admissions page of the AJRCA Website: https://ajrca.edu/admissions/inquire-today/</p>
Degree completion and cost	<p>Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Comments: For information regarding the length of the program see pages 15, 20, 28, 36 and 41 of the Course Catalogue available here: https://ajrca.edu/students/academic-catalog/</p> <p>For information on AJRCA's graduation and retention rates, see: https://ajrca.edu/about/wscuc-accreditation/accreditation-data/</p> <p>For information about cost of AJRCA's degrees see: https://ajrca.edu/students/tuition-and-fees/ and this information is also available to students in the Course Catalog, pages 72-73.</p>
Careers and employment	<p>Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
	<p>Comments: Three of the degrees are identified in the Catalog and online as professional degrees for careers as Rabbi, Cantor and Chaplain. See https://ajrca.edu/programs/professional-schools/</p>

*§602.16(a)(1)(vii)

**Section 487 (a)(20) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) prohibits Title IV eligible institutions from providing incentive compensation to employees or third party entities for their success in securing student enrollments. Incentive compensation includes commissions, bonus payments, merit salary adjustments, and promotion decisions based solely on success in enrolling students. These regulations do not apply to the recruitment of international students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.

Review Completed By: Anthony Lilles
Date: April 14, 2018

3. Student Complaints Review

STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's student complaints policies, procedures, and records.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Policy on student complaints	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, Is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Where? AJRCA Catalog (page 59 – although the catalogue is under revision as of today's date.) Comments:
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly: If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Comments: To this point, the administration attests that all matters have been handled informally and that formal processes have not had to be invoked.
Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? Academic deans of each professional school maintain these records. Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly:

	The academic deans periodically review records of student complaints with the vice-president.
	Comments: Students attest to their satisfaction with administration and faculty in responding to their complaints in a timely way.

*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission’s Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.

Review Completed By: **Anthony Lilles**

Date: **April 14, 2018**

4. Transfer Policy Review

TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulations*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s recruiting and admissions practices accordingly.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Is the policy publically available? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? AJRCA Catalog (p. 49)
	Does the policy(s) include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:

*§602.24(e): Transfer of credit policies. The accrediting agency must confirm, as part of its review for renewal of accreditation, that the institution has transfer of credit policies that--

- (1) Are publicly disclosed in accordance with 668.43(a)(11); and
- (2) Include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education.

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission’s Transfer of Credit Policy.

Review Completed By: **Anthony Lilles**

Date: **April 14, 2018**