

Cornell University

The JLIC educators at Cornell University are Rabbi Jason and Chana Leib.

Demographics:

There are about 3,000 Jewish students at Cornell University, which is about 20% of the entire student population at Cornell. Approximately 60-70 identify as Orthodox. About 60 students attend Minyan on Friday nights, and 15 have spent a year in Israel prior to enrolling at Cornell. There are a few Orthodox graduate students at Cornell. All freshmen (no exceptions) live on North Campus. Most upperclassmen live off campus, either in apartments or fraternities or sororities. There are 25 people (Men & Women) who live in the Center for Jewish Living (CJL). Some upper classmen choose to live on campus.

Kosher Food:

The Kosher Dining Hall is located next door to the Center for Jewish Living (CJL), serving three meals a day, except for two on Shabbat and Sunday (brunch). The kosher dining Hall also provides hot meals on north campus from Sunday through Friday, called North Star. Kosher sandwiches prepared and labeled by the Kosher Dining Hall can be found in many of the cafeterias around campus.

Programming and Shiurim:

Some past programs include: Edible Sukkah Making, Tishes, Bowling Night, Murder Mystery Night, Speed Dating, Mystery Maccabees, Movie Night and Jews on Ice (ice skating).

Jewish learning opportunities include: advanced Gemara Shiur, Contemporary Issues, two Shiurim on Shabbat, individualized learning with the either of the Leibs'. Mishmar on North (with Cholent), Two session Mini Series that include such topics as "Judaism on Rape," and "Hell from a Different Perspective,"

Orthodox Community:

The Center for Jewish Living (CJL) is an independent, student-run community center unique to Cornell. The building boasts student dormitories as well as the kosher dining hall, a Shul and a Beit Midrash. The CJL is the center for Orthodox students on campus, but all types of Jews are welcome. The CJL functions according to Orthodox standards of Jewish law.

The CJL has an elected board with 8-15 students, as well as an alumni advisory board. A Kedma group (Orthodox student group) also exists on campus, co-sponsoring periodical events.

The CJL provides housing for up to thirty male and female students every year.

There is a small Chabad community near Cornell that offers programming and hospitality on Shabbat. A few members of the small local community sometimes invite students over for Shabbat as well.

There is a daily Minyan three times a day.

Shabbat:

An Orthodox Minyan is available throughout Shabbat.

At the Kosher Dining Hall there are typically 150-200 students at Shabbat Dinner. Dinner features a communal singing of Shalom Alechem, followed by Kiddush. As part of the standard program, a student delivers a Dvar Torah, followed by announcements from Jewish student groups about upcoming events and activities. The CJL hosts an Oneg Shabbat at the adjoining house, and there is a Tisch bi-or tri-weekly with singing and Cholent. On Shabbat morning about 35-45 students eat at the Dining Hall. A full Seudat Shlishit buffet (meat) takes place between Mincha and Maariv, with traditional slow Shira. Shiurim are offered at the CJL on Friday after Maariv and on Shabbat morning after Kiddush. Cornell is in the process of constructing an Eruv, which will hopefully be completed by fall 2009.

Additional Resources:

The Super Seder program, the largest Seder in North America, continues to draw 700-1000 students per year and is organized by the JLIC couple.

There is a Jewish Studies major and minor concentration available.

”Something that drew me to Cornell as an Orthodox student was the size of the community and the opportunity to get involved right away. It never felt too big as to be intimidating, and yet it is big enough to keep meeting and interacting with new people constantly.”

- Dan Kohn, '08