

University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)

The JLIC educators at UCLA are Rabbi Aryeh and Sharona Kaplan.

Demographics:

There are about 3,500 Jewish undergraduate students at UCLA, which is about 10% of the undergraduate student population. Approximately thirty** students attend an Orthodox Minyan on Friday night, and about fifteen students have spent a year studying in Israel after high school.

**UCLA is a commuter campus and the Friday night Orthodox Minyan numbers do not nearly reflect the full extent of the broader Orthodox community. There are over 100 Orthodox students on campus, which is about 3% of the entire Jewish population at UCLA.

Kosher Food:

A Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf is located on the first floor of Hillel, where students can purchase cold and hot drinks, snacks and bagels throughout the week. There is a kosher meat restaurant that operates out of Hillel Monday through Thursday during lunch that offers a diverse array of fresh food that can be purchased with cash or a Bruin card (the ID card of UCLA). There are kosher, prepackaged dinners sold in the residence halls as part of the university meal plan. An extra fee is required to participate in the kosher meal plan. All meals are certified by the Heart K, the Kehilla of Los Angeles.

Programming and Shiurim:

Past programs at UCLA include: numerous social and learning events, cultural activities, and an Alternative Winter Break, where the JLIC Rabbi led a delegation of 12 orthodox students to coastal Mississippi as part of Hillel's Alternative Winter Break program. The students spent a week doing serious rebuilding work and learning more about the devastation inflicted on the Gulf Coast by Hurricane Katrina. There are also Onegs and Shabbatonim throughout the semester.

Jewish learning opportunities include: Chavrutot with the JLIC Educators, Parsha and Pizza, a Halacha Chabura, a Law School Shiur, Medical School Shiur, Coffee and Kaballa, Women's Talmud, Women's Chabura, and Women's Talmud.

Orthodox Community:

The Orthodox community at UCLA is increasingly student led. Official posts currently include two community co-chairs, a Gabbai, a Beit Midrash librarian, a women's chair and a student intern. A number of Orthodox students hold positions on Hillel's student board and represent the needs and interests of the JLIC community to Hillel.

Most of the Orthodox students live at home, within a ten mile radius of campus. The majority of Orthodox students living on campus live in the Bayit, a Jewish co-op a few blocks from campus. A handful of students live in the residence halls and another handful live in private apartments around Westwood Village.

There is a fully stocked Bet Midrash at Hillel as well as a kosher lunch program and a beautiful space for Shabbat minyan. The Young Research Library at UCLA has an extraordinary collection of Seforim including rare editions and manuscripts that are available for students to

access. Chabad, right off campus, offers Shabbat Minyanim and hospitality. The Shul rabbis from many of the area synagogues regularly come to UCLA to deliver shiurim and orchestrate dialogues with students. They are also available to answer Sheilot and provide mentorship.

Graduate students or married couples (as well as a number of the single undergraduates) live in the Pico-Robertson community, approximately five miles away.

There are two Ashkenazi Shuls (aside from Chabad) and two Sephardic Orthodox Shuls off campus that readily offer learning, hospitality and mentorship for students and open their homes and Shuls for student Shabbatonim throughout the year.

The Westwood Kehilla is an Orthodox shul and Kollel approximately one mile from campus. It is an extremely warm and welcoming community and offers an extensive range of classes on all levels and ongoing hospitality to students, particularly around Jewish holidays.

The Pico-Robertson area, located five miles from campus, offers a plethora of Kosher restaurants, caterers, markets, Shuls, Judaica stores and a Mikvah. A myriad of Jewish organizations offer social events, learning opportunities, holiday celebrations and Shabbat experiences that are designed for students. A weekly learning program for women, Torah Learning for Collegiates (TLC), is housed there and attracts a significant crowd of Orthodox women for regular social and educational gatherings. Students frequent the area to partake in the rich Jewish and cultural life available there.

There are daily Minyanim available on campus for Shacharit, Mincha and Maariv, except on Sunday. There is one, unified Orthodox service on Friday night and Shabbat day.

Shabbat:

Shabbat on campus is a highlight of the Orthodox life on campus. Rather than a weekly exodus every Friday, there is an influx of energy and excitement as commuter students are hosted by their 'on-campus' friends to join an experience uniquely suited for college-aged members of the Orthodox community.

Following services on Friday night, the Orthodox community partakes in a Kiddush, with Zemiros and socializing before dinner. Students then join the rest of the Hillel community for a free dinner and educational or social program, followed by dessert, ping-pong and shmoozing in the Coffee Bean lounge on the first floor of Hillel. From the Hillel, the Orthodox students head to the Bayit or a student's apartment for an Oneg.

Shabbat morning begins with services at Hillel and is followed by another free, catered meal. Students then remain in the Hillel building all day playing board games, ping-pong, pool, etc. On Shabbat afternoon, the JLIC rabbi offers a Shiur, and the Beit Midrash is open with Chevruta learning all day.

After Shabbat, many students meet in the center of campus to begin the new week with a weekly mens' football game.

There is an Eruv that encompasses the entire campus as well as the residence halls and off campus housing.

Additional Resources:

The Orthodox community has grown dramatically, demonstrated by the sheer number of students, not from UCLA, who flock to campus for Shabbat, holiday celebrations and educational opportunities that are offered by JLIC at UCLA.

Kosher food is now available at Hillel and in the residence halls. The number of Shiurim offered each week has grown and the popular weekly Parsha and Pizza class has spiked to an average attendance of 25 students each week.

There is a Jewish Studies major and minor available.

“As an Orthodox Jew living in the dorms, the Orthodox life at Hillel has become central to my life at UCLA...My closest friends are the people I’ve met through JLIC programs, morning minyan and Shabbat dinner. The Orthodox community at Hillel means a lot to me; I really don’t know how I’d fit into UCLA life without it.” --David Bardo, ‘08