Gratz College Instructor Bios
Scholars Program - Spring 2014

Dr. Uzi Adini is Professor Emeritus of Hebrew Literature and Education at Gratz College and also served in administration for many years. His expertise is in the fields of Hebrew Literature and Bible.

Dr. Joseph Davis received his Ph.D. is from Harvard University in the field of medieval Jewish history and literature. His area of academic specialization is the cultural and intellectual history of Ashkenazic Jews in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Dr. Davis teaches a variety of courses on aspects of medieval Jewish culture and thought and on modern Jewish thought. He is the author of Yom-Tov Lipmann Heller: Portrait of a Seventeenth Century Rabbi and various journal articles.

Dr. Reena Sigman Friedman is Associate Professor of Modern Jewish History at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and adjunct associate professor at Gratz College. Dr. Friedman lectures widely on topics related to Jewish history, Jewish women and the contemporary Jewish community. She is the author of These Are Our Children: Jewish Orphanages in the United States, 1880-1925, several encyclopedia entries and numerous scholarly articles.

Rabbi Albert Gabbai, Rabbi at Congregation Mikveh Israel, was born in Egypt and ordained in Israel. Fluent in more than 6 languages, he lectures on Rabbinics, Torah, History and Sephardi Judaism.

Rabbi Joshua Gutoff, Ed.D. holds a B.A. in literature from Yale College and an M.A. and Ed.D. from The Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), where he also received his rabbinic ordination. His dissertation is on Talmud education and the moral imagination and he is the author of a number of widely-read articles on Jewish thought.

Mira Korn is the Coordinator of the Hebrew Ulpan program. She has been a Hebrew instructor at Gratz College for many years. Mira has a BA in Hebrew Literature from Hebrew University.

Dr. Jerry Kutnick served as Associate Professor of History and Jewish Thought, Director of Continuing Education and then Dean for Academic Affairs at Gratz College from 1984-2012. He is an author and lecturer on intellectual Jewish history, with expertise in American Jewry and American Zionism. Dr. Kutnick received his B.A. and M.A. from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and his Ph. D. from Brandeis University.

Rabbi David Rabeeya, Ph.D. was born in Baghdad, Iraq. After migrating to Israel in the formative years of the state, he earned his B.A. in literature and history from Hebrew University and an M.A. in Semitic languages from Tel Aviv University. He received his Ph.D. in Arabic from Dropsie University with a dissertation on the Jewish, Muslim and Christian dialects of Baghdad. In 1997 he received his rabbinical ordination.

Rita Ratson is the Coordinator of the Yiddish Language and Culture programs at Gratz College. She is a translator for the National Yiddish Book Center and has recently published, along with her associate in this endeavor, the “Yiddish Notebook”, as a classroom aid for the Yiddish student.

Dr. Asaf Romirowsky is a Middle East analyst and adjunct scholar at the Foundation for Defense for Democracies and the Middle East Forum. He is a former IDF (Israel Defense Forces) International Relations liaison officer in the West Bank and to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Dr. Romirowsky publishes widely in the national press and in scholarly journals. He holds a BA from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, MA degrees from Villanova University and West Chester University and a doctorate from Kings College London.
**Dr. Ruth Sandberg** is the Landau Professor of Rabbinics at Gratz College. As an academic and an ordained rabbi, her expertise is in comparative religion, Jewish law, Rabbinics and Midrash.

**Dr. Michael Steinlauf** is Associate Professor of History at Gratz College. Director of the Gratz Holocaust and Genocide Studies Program, He holds an M.A. in Literature from Columbia University and a doctorate in Judaic Studies from Brandeis University. His research and teaching focus on East European Jewish history and culture, Polish-Jewish relations, and the Holocaust. Dr. Steinlauf served as chief historical advisor of modern Jewish culture for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, which will open in Warsaw in 2014.

**Rabbi Lynnda Targan** is an award-winning writer, oral historian and communications expert. She is a co-founder of the Women’s Midrash Institute and presides over many life cycle events and services with her original evolving liturgy for healing services, baby namings, prayers and meditations and more.