Economics in Jewish Law and Philosophy
Rabbi Daniel Feldman

This course endeavors to consider perspectives of Jewish Law and Philosophy toward the issues of society and economic questions, including the role of money and property, communism vs. capitalism, *Shemittah*, marketplace regulation, minimum wage legislation, competition, communal responsibilities toward providing for the needy, healthcare, labor relations, and education, intellectual property, as well as insights from behavioral economics. We will also consider the broader implications of various Talmudic topics, including *Ona'ah, Ribit, HaMotzi M'Chavero Alav HaRaayah,* and *Kofin Al Midat Sedom.* In addition, in light of the current pandemic situation, we will consider issues of economic policy related to that situation.

The course will incorporate discussions and readings from contemporary scholars of the field, not limited to but prominently inclusive of the writings of Rabbi Dr. Aaron Levine. In particular, we will draw upon his later works such as *Economic Public Policy and Jewish Law*, and *Economic Morality and Jewish Law*.

The class will be graded on a combination of readings, a term paper, and a final exam. It may also involve one or more guest lectures.

Readings will include:

Blau, Yitzchak. "Rabbinic Responses to Communism" *Tradition*

Feldman, Daniel Z. "The Jewish Prohibition of Interest" *The Oxford Handbook of Judaism and Economics;* and readings from *Divine Footsteps: Chesed and the Jewish Soul;* and Á Brief Overview of the Hetter Mekhirah Controversy" in *Tradition*

Glickman, Ozer "Think Global, Act Local: Tzedakah in a Global Society" *The Orthodox Forum*

Levine, Aaron, various chapters from *Moral Issues of the Marketplace in Jewish Law; Economic Morality in Jewish Law;* and *Economic Public Policy and Jewish Law*

Lichtenstein, Aaron. "Whither Jewish Philanthropy" *The Orthodox Forum*

Sacks, Jonathan "Charity as Justice" in *To Heal a Fractured World*

Selections from the Talmud and Codes relevant to the above topics