



Creating Change

A Vision for RRC's Future



Strategic Plan, 2008–2013



Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

בית המדרש לרבנים ליחידות מתחדשת

ABOUT RRC

The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC) is the intellectual center and rabbinical training institution of the Reconstructionist movement, one of the four main branches of American Judaism. The outgrowth of a philosophy developed in the 1930s, the graduate school was founded in 1968 with the explicit objective of training a new kind of rabbi, one uniquely prepared to lead and serve a rapidly changing American Jewish community in myriad settings. RRC's rigorous curriculum emphasizes the study of Jewish theology, history and ritual while also addressing the practical aspects of rabbinic life and the responsibility of rabbis to act as agents of social change. Graduates go on to assume leadership positions in synagogues, nonprofit organizations and philanthropies; to become educators at colleges and universities; and to serve as chaplains in hospitals and the military.



ABOUT RECONSTRUCTIONIST JUDAISM

The Reconstructionist movement is one of the four main branches of American Judaism. For Reconstructionist Jews, Judaism is more than a system of religious beliefs and practices. It is the continuously evolving civilization of the Jewish people, encompassing not only religion, but also art, music, language, food, dance and everything else that makes up a civilization. Reconstructionist Jews believe that for Judaism to remain relevant, each generation must reexamine it, “reconstructing” it to meet the emotional and spiritual needs of the day. Egalitarian and inclusive, Reconstructionist congregations are known for embracing intellectual discourse and critique, encouraging innovation in liturgy and ritual, and affirming Judaism’s uniqueness without implying chosenness or superiority over others.



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How We Got Here



*David Roberts,
Chair, Board of
Governors*

*Member, Strategic
Planning Committee*

We are extremely pleased to share with you the strategic plan that will guide the work of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC) over the next five years. Adopted by the board of governors on April 6, 2008, the plan was developed by the Strategic Planning Committee. The committee included representatives from all of RRC's key constituencies — our board, students, administration, faculty and alumni — who worked tirelessly on this project from October 2006 through April 2008. We thank them for their commitment, imagination and collegiality.

The Strategic Planning Committee was made up of the following formidable group of individuals, with whom we were honored to work:

Jennifer S. Abraham, Vice President for Administration
Susan Beckerman, Vice Chair, Board of Governors
Howard Blitman, Board of Governors Representative
Rabbi Dan Ehrenkrantz, President
Carol Feder, Board of Governors Representative
Robert Horowitz, Ph.D., Vice President for Institutional
Advancement
S. Tamar Kamionkowski, Ph.D., Vice President for
Academic Affairs and Academic Dean
Lori Hope Lefkowitz, Ph.D., Faculty Representative
David Roberts, Chair, Board of Governors
Sandra Rubenstein, Student Representative
Rabbi Yael Ridberg, Alumni Representative
Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Vice President for Governance

Before presenting the plan, we would like to share with you a bit about the thinking that went into this important project and about what we hope to achieve.



*Rabbi Dan
Ehrenkrantz,
President*

*Chair, Strategic
Planning Committee*

THE PROCESS

From the start, the Strategic Planning Committee was determined to involve not only representatives of RRC's constituencies, but also the groups themselves. The committee heard reports and received recommendations from the board, students, staff, faculty and alumni on the institution's strengths and weaknesses, its opportunities and challenges, and the activities and programs it should be pursuing. Committee members also conducted extensive interviews with national Jewish leaders inside and outside the Reconstructionist movement to gain insight into the key issues facing rabbinical seminaries, in general, and RRC, in particular.

Among those we interviewed who hold prominent positions outside the Reconstructionist movement were Shifra Bronznick, Principal, Bronznick & Co., LLC; Wayne Firestone, President, Hillel: The Foundation for Campus Jewish Life; Rabbi Mordechai Liebling, Executive Vice President, Jewish Funds for Justice; Or Mars, Director, Graduate Fellowship Program, The Wexner Foundation; Rabbi Kerry M. Olitzky, Executive Director, Jewish Outreach Institute; Marcella Kanfer Rolnick, Vice Chair, Gojo Industries, and President and Chair, Lippman Kanfer Family Foundation; and John S. Ruskay, Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer, UJA - Federation of New York. We thank them for taking the time to share their insights.

In addition, the committee created three subcommittees, each representing a cross-section of RRC's constituencies.

The *Subcommittee on Mission, Vision and Values* held its own sessions with these constituencies, generating ideas that ultimately formed the basis for our new mission statement and our first-ever vision and values statements (see pages 12–13). The *Subcommittee on Special Programs*, which looked at RRC initiatives

unconnected to the curriculum (e.g., RRC Press and Distance Learning), and the *Subcommittee on Assessment*, which looked at the systems we have in place to evaluate how well we do in reaching our goals, each conducted a series of internal interviews. Their findings were summarized in the first comprehensive reports on assessment and nonacademic programs RRC has produced. The issues brought to light by these two subcommittees are reflected in the Strategic Plan's goals and objectives (see pages 14–15).

We are grateful to the members of all three subcommittees and everyone who worked with them for their time and their candor. All told, more than 150 people had direct input in the planning process. We look forward to hearing much more from all of them as we move into the implementation phase.

KEY ISSUES

Based on the subcommittees' work and other research, the Strategic Planning Committee identified seven key issues on which we felt RRC needed to focus. Some pertain to activities in which we are already involved, while others concern things confronting us. All are matters to which RRC needs to pay special attention over the next five years. They are:

1. **Demographics of the Jewish Community.**

As ever, in Israel and throughout the Diaspora, the Jewish community is in transition. In Israel, there is a new openness to non-Orthodox approaches to text study and ritual practice; we wish to expose our students to this openness and to contribute to it ourselves. In North America, Jews are moving from traditional Jewish centers like Philadelphia and Detroit to places in the Sunbelt, like Arizona, Florida and California. There is

confusion and controversy about who “the Jewish community” is. There is also burgeoning interest in the cultural, rather than the religious, aspects of Judaism and a seemingly endless number of ways in which Jews feel comfortable expressing their individual values and interests. The phenomenon of post- and trans-denominationalism is especially noteworthy, prevalent as it is among the generation likely to make up the next group of potential RRC students. While RRC would be foolish to be complacent in the face of these shifts, we are certain of our continued relevance. We firmly believe that RRC can and should continue to be an open-minded yet clearly *denominational* institution that clarifies and transmits Reconstructionist values and ideas.

2. **Technology.** We are living in the midst of a “digital revolution” that presents great opportunities and great challenges for RRC. We certainly want to have the funding, staff and expertise to take advantage of opportunities that make sense for us; used wisely, technology—Web sites, online learning and similar tools—will let us expand our reach far beyond Philadelphia. At the same time, we want to make sure that we do not allow technology to become an end in itself, diverting resources from efforts we know for certain are essential to helping us achieve our mission.
3. **A Reconstructionist Approach.** The insights and mandates of Reconstructionist Judaism—especially the idea that Judaism is the evolving religious civilization of the Jewish people rather than the result of supernatural revelation—continue to be a source of inspiration and creativity for us. We strive to live up to the ideals of Mordecai M. Kaplan, the movement’s

founder, and those who shared his belief that each generation must embrace the challenge of reconstructing Judaism for its own time.

4. **RRC’s Image and Influence.** The many Reconstructionist ideas that have helped to shape American Jewish life have gone largely unattributed. We want to continue to serve as a laboratory for Jewish intellectual and religious creativity while at the same making our contributions to Jewish thought and practice more widely known.
5. **RRC’s Material Resources.** To achieve our mission of educating Reconstructionist leaders, advancing scholarship and developing resources for contemporary Jewish life, RRC needs both a more solid financial foundation and a more efficient use of its physical space. To generate more support we have to increase the sources and amount of funding we attract, and identify revenue-producing initiatives consonant with our mission. At the same time, we must make sure that we are taking full advantage of our current facility to fulfill the needs of our students and our staff.
6. **RRC’s People.** It has been gratifying to discover how much of the wider community considers the people who make up RRC—our board, students, staff and faculty—to be our greatest asset. We truly are an institution made up of exceptional individuals. They come to RRC and they stay here because they know that they are valued and respected. By recognizing and building on this culture of professional excellence and personal respect, the Strategic Plan will ensure that everyone associated with RRC finds it an outstanding place to learn, work and support.

7. RRC's Educational Program. Our educational program is as strong and as valued as our people, and the Strategic Plan aims to bolster every aspect of that program—the organization and aims of the curriculum, the caliber of the faculty, the priority placed both on students' academic progress and their personal development, and the time and attention devoted to each individual.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

With these issues and insights in mind, the Strategic Planning Committee examined every aspect of RRC, ultimately generating the four overarching goals toward which we will work between now and 2013:

- The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC) will strive for excellence.
- RRC will serve as a vital provider of Jewish thought and resources.
- RRC will raise the image and influence of Reconstructionist Judaism and will support the growth of the Reconstructionist constituency.
- RRC will secure the funds to achieve its mission.

The committee then broke down these goals into 22 specific objectives. Each encourages us to stretch while making sure we do not overreach. Together with our new mission, vision and values statements, these goals and objectives make up our strategic plan. While we have done long-range planning since the 1980s, this is the first time in our four decades of existence that we have articulated our mission so precisely and so clearly, and the first time we have created a plan to realize that mission. We intend to be accountable to it and to you, and we hope that, from time to time, you will let us know how we are doing.

May we all go from strength to strength.



David Roberts, Chair, Board of Governors



Rabbi Dan Ehrenkrantz, President

Welcome to the Future

As I write this in the summer of 2008, I am astounded at how far RRC has come since September 2003, when the board of governors voted to adopt the institution's previous major plan, a long-range plan covering those five years. We have reason to feel extremely proud of what we have achieved during that time. Our accomplishments include:

- Launching the **Leadership Campaign**, RRC's largest (\$50 million) and first comprehensive fundraising campaign, aimed at generating support for ongoing operations, capital expenses and the endowment;
- Creating the **President's Council**, which has expanded the pool of donors and enabled us to share some of the intellectual richness that exists at RRC with a wider audience;
- Creating and filling the critical positions of **Director, Bet Midrash**, to foster students' love of text study, and **Director, Educational Resources**, to offer students intensive individual learning support;
- Initiating a vigorous **grants program** that has allowed us to expand our multifaith religious studies program and launch our most ambitious alumni-education program to date; and
- Completing a **rebranding** effort that has yielded a more dynamic institutional identity, including new Web site design and architecture.

Given these accomplishments, it is exciting to think what we can achieve over the next five years. Our goals are ambitious. It is my hope that the Strategic Plan will do nothing less than pave the way for us to create RRC anew.

The plan has four overriding goals that grew out of the mission, vision and values statements adopted by the board on October 14, 2007. Between now and 2013 we will focus on 22 objectives, each corresponding to one of the four goals. The objectives have been crafted to ensure that we are able to make progress on all of them regardless of RRC's financial outlook in any given year. (Of course in many instances, the more resources we have the greater our progress will be.)

Let me give you a taste of what I hope we will accomplish over the next five years, guided by this plan:

RABBINIC TRAINING

Having achieved our goal of striving for excellence in rabbinic training, I hope to see a program that offers:

- A sophisticated response to the growing interest among rabbis and prospective rabbis in working for social change;
- A Hebrew-language program that gives students greater confidence in their skills;
- An Israel-year program that our students clamor to attend;

- A greater number of substantive student jobs that pay reasonably, build rabbinic skills and complement students' academic work;
- A consistently diverse student body made up of intelligent and compassionate men and women dedicated to creating a rich learning environment for each other; and
- A faculty that produces exemplary scholarship while continually strengthening its classroom and advising skills.

These are just a few of the ways in which I would like us to be able to measure RRC's progress toward our goal of excellence five years from now. Along with our other efforts, these accomplishments will ensure that RRC graduates rabbinic leaders who will be change agents, successful in helping individuals and institutions transform themselves in ways that honor the past, meet the needs of the present, and create a vital and hopeful future.

ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

Having achieved our goal of striving for excellence in administration and governance, I hope to see:

- A professionally run, highly focused organization guided by a board of governors that fulfills its responsibilities

in an exemplary way, giving RRC's staff and faculty the guidance and institutional strength they need to achieve RRC's mission;

- A comprehensive assessment plan that spurs us to discover new areas for improvement; and
- A staff that is fairly compensated; does its work supported by clearly articulated, achievable goals; and enjoys the benefits of strong supervisory training.

These are some of the ways in which a sustained commitment to excellence will create a well-run, mission-driven organization that "lives" its values and responds thoughtfully and strategically to internal and external challenges and opportunities.

JEWISH THOUGHT AND RESOURCES

In the service of our goal of becoming a vital provider of Jewish thought and resources, I hope to see a rabbinical school:

- Whose faculty members have the support they need to realize their potential as scholars; are publishing widely and to acclaim in peer-reviewed journals and the popular media; are teaching in the broader community as well as in our classrooms; and come to RRC each day feeling that they are returning to a lively, nurturing intellectual home;

- That encourages voices both from outside and within RRC to produce imaginative, thoughtful work that reflects our core values and can be shared with the wider community;
- Whose archives are both a growing repository of its own history and an accessible resource for scholars; and
- Whose academic centers continue to provide sustained focus and innovative programs on issues critical to the future of the Jewish community.

In this way, RRC will make thoughtful, substantive, open-minded contributions to the ongoing conversation in the Jewish community.

IMAGE AND INFLUENCE

To achieve our goal of raising the image and influence of Reconstructionist Judaism and supporting the growth of the Reconstructionist constituency, we will draw on some of the strategies articulated above to become a place:

- That uses technology in new and exciting ways to share RRC's message with the widest possible audience;
- Whose graduates and supporters, as well as those who work and study at RRC, feel such a strong connection to one another and to us that they serve as our ambassadors; and

- Whose ever-growing community of advocates, accomplished graduates, and widely respected faculty help transform and enrich religious life in North America and Israel by enabling communities of all faiths to learn from one another while maintaining their own deeply felt spiritual traditions.

In this way, RRC will help strengthen Reconstructionist institutions and individuals.

Together these accomplishments, supported by sufficient financial resources—the focus of the plan's last goal—will help us achieve RRC's mission and vision and ensure that RRC remains an innovator, a vital source of Jewish thought and leadership, and a home for original and open-minded religious voices.

I look forward to updating you on our progress.



Rabbi Dan Ehrenkrantz, President

Making Change Happen

Over the course of its work, the Strategic Planning Committee tried to articulate the “theory of change” underlying and guiding our efforts.* As an institution and as passionate individuals engaged in a collective enterprise, we wanted to be able to characterize what it is we wish RRC to contribute to the world—what we wish RRC to change—and how we intend to effect that change.

The mission, vision and values statements address the “what.” The mission says that RRC “educates leaders, advances scholarship and develops resources for contemporary Jewish life.” The vision and values statements build on each of those verbs, spelling out our hopes for a world infused with and transformed by our work.

The goals and objectives explain how we will do that work. To begin with, a Reconstructionist perspective is crucial. Everything we do is informed by the values and ideas of Mordecai M. Kaplan, other members of the “founding” generation, those who came after them, and contemporary Reconstructionist thinkers. That is why developing influential and innovative resources that will let us share those values and ideas with the world is one of the Strategic Plan’s highest priorities.

The Reconstructionist values and ideas we consider most potent are these:

- The expansiveness and creativity inherent in Kaplan’s definition of Judaism as the evolving religious civilization of the Jewish people;
- The sense of both empowerment and responsibility embedded in that concept and in the ensuing mandate that every generation of Jews must reconstruct Judaism for its own time;
- The concept of Jewish peoplehood, which presumes that particularism (the embrace of a particular identity) is valuable not merely as an end in itself, but also as a means of joining Jews with all of humanity to create a world transformed and redeemed;
- The dedication to fostering communities knowledgeable about Judaism and committed to encouraging participation by people representing the full spectrum of Jewish belief and practice; and
- The religious sensibility that emphasizes the human partnership with the Divine and promotes a deepened awareness of both oneself and everything with which one interacts.

As the intellectual center and the sole rabbinical training institution of Reconstructionist Judaism, RRC brings these principles to life by:

*A theory of change describes how an organization plans to achieve its long-term goals.

- Combining the elements of a graduate school, a professional school and a *yeshivah* (a place focusing on the study of Jewish texts);
- Being selective, investing heavily in and demanding much of the individuals we prepare for leadership roles in the Jewish community and the wider world;
- Asking our students to master Jewish history, text and liturgy;
- Immersing them in practical-rabbinics courses to develop leadership skills;
- Requiring them to supplement their classroom study with supervised field internships;
- Insisting that they help us build a community of people as interested in the welfare of others, near and far, as they are in their own development and well-being; and
- Engaging in a highly ideological field of endeavor while understanding that we are accountable—to our board, students, staff, faculty, supporters and alumni, as well as to accrediting agencies (which evaluate schools' fitness to operate)—for the way we translate our ideology into a compelling and effective educational program.

We do all this because we know that if we are successful, our graduates will become change agents capable of transmitting RRC's approach to Judaism and religious life, and ultimately making the world a better place. They will foster individual growth and transform institutions, whether they work in synagogues, colleges and universities; hospitals or Jewish communal organizations; or in settings neither we nor they can imagine.

This steadfast belief in our graduates' capabilities has been repeatedly affirmed. Yet while those who complete our program are profoundly changed by it and those who interact with our graduates are deeply affected by the experience, our ultimate goal is not personal transformation. Our ultimate goal is transformation writ large—the personal, religious and social transformation of all humanity.



Rabbi Deborah Waxman,
Vice President for Governance

Mission, Vision and Values

Mission

The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College educates leaders, advances scholarship and develops resources for contemporary Jewish life.

Vision

The vitality of the Jewish people requires a dynamic approach to Jewish life. The approach must honor the past, meet the needs of the present and provide a road to the future through bold, innovative thinking.

The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College will:

- **EDUCATE** rabbis and other Jewish-community leaders who will help people create meaningful, purposeful and spiritual lives; engage Jews of all ages in sacred study grounded in scholarly, traditional and innovative methods of interpretation; foster participation in Jewish cultural arts and letters; inspire Jews and others to pursue justice, peace and righteousness; and lead efforts to build and sustain participatory and vibrant Jewish communities.
- **ADVANCE** scholarship with an esteemed teaching faculty that gives voice to Jewish wisdom throughout the ages; sheds light on the historical and intellectual dynamics of Jewish religious civilization; and contributes fresh ideas to contemporary Jewish life through research and publication.
- **DEVELOP** and widely disseminate Jewish liturgical and educational materials that foster meaningful living and promote a world in which all peoples coexist peacefully and with mutual respect.

Core Values

תורה

Torah: Jewish Learning

We are dedicated to gaining wisdom from the Jewish experience throughout time and wherever Jews have lived. We approach the study of sacred texts with love, humility and intellectual honesty. We seek to create lifelong learners.

קהילה

Kehillah: Community

We are a conscious community that strives for **קדושה** (*kedushah* / holiness) by dignifying all people as created in the Divine image; acting according to principles of democracy, egalitarianism and *menschlichkeit*; and responsibly caring for and utilizing our human, financial and natural resources.

חשבון הנפש

Heshbon Hanefesh: Reflection in the Service of Excellence

As a community, we are committed to evaluating our thoughts and deeds, striving for excellence and supporting one another in this process.

צדק

Tzedek: Justice

We strive to pursue justice in the world through **עבודה** (*avodah* / sacred service), **גמילות חסדים** (*gemilut hasadim* / acts of loving kindness) and **צדקה** (*tzedakah* / social and economic responsibility) toward all people.

אהבת ישראל

Ahavat Yisrael: Love of Israel

עם ישראל

Am Yisrael: Love of the Jewish People

We share responsibility for the flourishing of the Jewish people.

ארץ ישראל

Eretz Yisrael: Love of the Land of Israel

We value the land and State of Israel as a spiritual, intellectual and historical center of the Jewish people.

שלימות

Shleymut: Integrity

We work to attain wholeness by caring for our physical and emotional well-being (**בין אדם לעצמו** / *beyn adam le'atzmo*); honing our virtues in order to live by our moral principles and obligations (**בין אדם לחברו** / *beyn adam lekhavero*); and deepening our connection with God (**בין אדם למקום** / *beyn adam lamakom*).

יהדות מתחדשת

Yahadut Mitkhadeshet: Reconstructionist Judaism

We value the wisdom of our ancestors and recognize that Judaism must be revitalized in each age. It is our obligation to wrestle with our traditions, to infuse new meanings into Jewish practices and to add our voices to the chain of tradition. We embark upon this enterprise with courage, creativity and joy.

Goals and Objectives, 2008–2013

GOAL

The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC) will strive for excellence.

Objectives

Academics and Co-Curriculum*

- Ensure that our program is consistent with best educational practices.
- Ensure that our curriculum and co-curriculum are attuned to the changing nature of the Jewish community and are responsive to the needs of students preparing for the rabbinate.
- Ensure that an understanding of Israel—the land, the literature and the people—is a vital and effective component of RRC’s curriculum.
- Enable students to take on diverse work experiences that further their rabbinical development.
- Maintain a student body of the highest caliber by attracting well-qualified candidates to RRC’s degree programs.
- Ensure that the size of the student body and the academic program are well-balanced and mutually supportive.
- Strengthen the training, assessment and support of the faculty, both as instructors and as advisors.

Administration and Governance

- Strive to make rabbinical education affordable to all qualified students.
- Ensure that RRC employees are adequately compensated.
- Ensure that the board fulfills its fiduciary and leadership responsibilities with distinction.
- Use technology to enhance efficiency.
- Be systematic about mandate, governance, supervision and assessment for all non-curricular initiatives.
- Create a comprehensive assessment plan for RRC.
- Continually implement appropriate best practices in the areas of financial management and human resources.
- Continue to investigate increasing RRC’s physical plant.

**Non-classroom programs designed to amplify and support the academic program*

GOAL

RRC will serve as a vital provider of Jewish thought and resources.

Objectives

- Establish new ways to support the intellectual growth and scholarly productivity of the faculty.
- Increase the quantity and reach of high-quality Reconstructionist resources.

GOAL

RRC will raise the image and influence of Reconstructionist Judaism and will support the growth of the Reconstructionist constituency.

Objectives

- Use technology to expand RRC's influence.
- Foster a greater sense of connection among RRC's first-degree stakeholders: board of governors, students, faculty, staff, President's Council, alumni and Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association (RRA) members.
- In cooperation with the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation (JRF) and the RRA, support the spread of Reconstructionist ideas, activities and communities.

GOAL

RRC will secure the funds to achieve its mission.

Objectives

- Build consistent and increased giving by expanding the donor base and enhancing donor loyalty and affinity.
- Nurture and encourage mission-driven programs that generate revenue.

STRATEGIC PLANNING: TERMS DEFINED

The field of strategic planning contains no fixed or narrowly defined language to describe its activities. Different individuals and organizations use terms like “mission,” “vision,” “goals” and “objectives” to mean entirely different things. In the end it does not matter which terms are used or how. What matters is that everyone uses the same terms to refer to the same concepts. Below, in alphabetical order, are the terms we used and how we define them.

Goals: Targets that are overarching, visionary or general. A goal is an ends statement (i.e., where do we want to end up) that guides a program or management (i.e., administrative, financial and governance) function. A goal can be fulfilled in a variety of different ways. Together with objectives, goals enable an organization to answer the question, “What do we seek to accomplish?” in measurable ways.

Implementation Plan: A document that lays out how to achieve the priorities of the strategic plan over the short term (usually 18 months or less). For each goal and objective, the plan identifies its relative importance; the people, time and funds required to accomplish it; the individuals responsible for doing so; and the metrics (see below) needed to assess progress.

Metrics: Quantitative and qualitative sets of data gathered to provide sufficient information to assess whether a plan has been effective. Metrics may measure activities (e.g., how many programs, how many participants), impact (e.g., did the activity have the intended effect?) or both. The use of metrics and other assessment tools facilitates many crucial activities. First, it provides the basis for developing pre-planning strategies and monitoring the effectiveness of the planning process itself as it proceeds. Second, it offers a solid basis on which to judge the ultimate success of the goals, objectives and implementation plans in fulfilling the organization’s mission and achieving its stated goals.

Mission Statement: A concise declaration of the primary purpose of an organization and an affirmation of the reason for its existence. The statement is both narrow enough to explain succinctly why the organization exists and broad

enough to allow for flexibility. Through a simple, powerful, inspiring declaration, a mission statement communicates what others can expect from the organization. This statement has the capacity to drive an organization from top to bottom. An effective and clear mission statement can ensure consensus on purpose, provide a primary reference point for decision making, communicate identity and purpose, and help to guide the evaluation of programs and priorities.

Objectives: Specific, concrete actions taken to realize or fulfill the overarching goals, with each goal usually supported by two or more objectives. An objective is a precise—ideally, measurable—time-based result that supports the achievement of a goal. Objectives might include the kind of change sought (e.g., to reduce or expand something), the area in which change is desired (e.g., enrollment), the population targeted (e.g., prospective students), the degree of change sought (e.g., an increase of 10 percent), and/or the time frame (e.g., within the next year). When creating objectives, it is important to consider how data will be collected to evaluate whether the objectives have been achieved (see **Metrics**, above).

Stakeholders: Members of constituencies that have an emotional, financial, professional or other stake in an organization’s success. At RRC, the primary stakeholders are those constituencies with fiduciary responsibility for the organization—the board of governors, the administration and the faculty. Students are both primary stakeholders and “clients,” or end users, of the organization. (RRC’s mission statement makes clear that students are the primary population served by the school.) RRC’s secondary stakeholders are its alumni. All other Reconstructionist Jews are tertiary stakeholders. (While RRC’s mission calls for service to the larger Jewish community and

the wider world, the members of these constituencies do not knowingly identify themselves with RRC and therefore cannot be considered stakeholders.)

Strategic Planning: A management tool designed to improve an organization’s effectiveness. A strategic plan is a systemic process through which an organization (1) assesses the landscape in which it operates—its strengths and weaknesses as well as the challenges and opportunities present in the social, economic, political, regulatory, technological, educational, religious and cultural environment; and (2) builds consensus among its key stakeholders on how to fulfill its mission given these realities. The strategic planning process is filled with decisions and actions that grow out of extensive information-gathering, an exploration of alternatives to the way things are currently done, and an emphasis on identifying the implications of decisions under consideration. The process yields a tangible result—a written strategic plan, which serves as a blueprint for the future. However strategic planning is less about producing a formal plan than it is about codifying the collective intelligence of an organization and directing that intelligence toward future actions and behaviors.

Theory of Change: A concept increasingly used in social philanthropy to articulate assumptions about the nature of a social problem and its solution. A theory of change also outlines how the individual steps taken to address the problem can build on one another, magnifying their combined impact, and how the value of that magnified impact may be measured.

Values: The set of principles that guides and influences an organization’s daily work, interactions, relationships and overall culture. These values specify the ideals and behaviors important to the organization and provide a benchmark against which individuals can measure the organization’s success.

Vision Statement: A statement that concisely articulates an organization’s aspirations and provides a sense of where it is headed.

Sources:

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3. “Drowning in Data,” Alana Conner Snibbe, *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (Fall 2006)
4. “For Good, Measure,” Jon Gertner, *The New York Times Magazine* (March 9, 2008)
5. *Strategic Planning Workbook for Nonprofit Organizations*, Bryan W. Barry (Fieldstone Alliance, Revised Edition, 2005)
6. *Strategic Planning in Higher Education: A Guide for Leaders*, Sherrie A. Tromp and Brent D. Ruben (NACUBO [National Association of College and University Business Officers], 2004)

ADMINISTRATION

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

Rabbi Dan Ehrenkrantz, President

Raela Forman, Administrative Assistant

President's Cabinet

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Alix Friedman, Assistant Vice President for Communications

S. Tamar Kamionkowski, Ph.D., Vice President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean

Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Vice President for Governance

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KOLOT: THE CENTER FOR JEWISH WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

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THE CENTER FOR JEWISH ETHICS

Cheryl Plumly, Administrative Assistant

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND DEAN'S OFFICE

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Vice President and Dean

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