

Online seminary aids women's continuing study

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CyberSem grew out of Dr. Chavi Goldberg's belief that all Jewish women should have access to continuing Torah study and the realization that with today's technology you can do almost anything – except go to seminary.

CyberSem offers women interactive online semester courses as well as self-paced video courses. The winter semester for digital classroom courses begins on Jan. 1.

"I believe women should pursue what they have always had in their heart," says Dr. Goldberg. "When they have time for themselves after raising kids or establishing a career, they should pursue dreams for themselves."

"I am not in competition with the seminary or anybody," she adds. "People know the necessity of continuing learning. I am here to fill the gap for people who don't have a way to continue that connection to Torah study."

Dr. Goldberg's own education has given her the skills she needs to develop courses, recruit teachers and manage student relations at CyberSem. She holds a bachelor of Jewish education with honors from Talpiot College, a master's in graduate teaching and curriculum development from Nova Southeastern University, and an Ed.D. in instructional technology and distance education from Nova Southeastern University.

CyberSem's first classes were directed at women who had a Jewish day school education, but who did not have access to continuing Torah study. But now Dr. Goldberg developed a course designed to teach women the skills that a child would learn in grades 2 to 12 that make text

study possible. The new course, available Jan. 1, adapts the teaching style for adults and will give women the opportunity to either learn with their kids or on their own. Women completing the course will gain the skills to enroll in the other CyberSem courses.

“It will provide women the ability to learn on their own in areas that were closed to them,” says Dr. Goldberg.

In addition, CyberSem provides a Jewish history course that some universities accept as transfer credit to fulfill history requirements. This course does not require any special background and is open to all women. Dr. Goldberg said she will help students negotiate transfer credits at their college.

“For people in remote areas, this can be a lifeline for them,” she says. “For women who are lonely or devoid of the opportunity to gain Jewish learning, this is the perfect opportunity.” For more information on the classes available, visit cybersem.com.