YEHUDA SARNA

Curriculum vitae | October 2026

New York, NY | 917.991.7169 | js1643@nyu.edu | linkedin.com/in/yehuda-sarna-071403

CURRENT APPOINTMENTS

University Chaplain, Global Spiritual Life, New York University, 2010–present

Hannah and Ed Low Professor for Community-Engaged Scholarship, Center for the Study of Antisemitism, NYU, 2024–present

Executive Director, Bronfman Center for Jewish Life, NYU, 2013–present

Adjunct Associate Professor of Public Service and Faculty Co-Director, Wagner–Skirball MPA/MA Program, NYU, 2012–present

Co-Founder and Senior Fellow, Of Many Institute for Multifaith Leadership, NYU, 2012–present

EDUCATION

EdD, Education Leadership and Innovation, NYU Steinhardt, 2026. Distinguished Problem of Practice Award; problem of practice: Reducing Harassment on the Basis of National Origin in Post-Secondary Schools.

MA, Medieval Jewish History, Bernard Revel Graduate School, Yeshiva University, 2024

Rabbinic Ordination, Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary, Yeshiva University, 2006

Private Ordination, Rabbi Avi Weiss, September 12, 2001

BA, English Literature, magna cum laude, Honors Program, Yeshiva University, 2001

Advanced Talmudic Studies, Yeshivat Har Etzion, Israel, 1995–1997

INSTITUTION-BUILDING AND PROGRAMS FOUNDED

Of Many Institute for Multifaith Leadership, NYU (2012)

Co-founded with Imam Khalid Latif, Linda G. Mills and Chelsea Clinton. Co-developed academic course and advised on NYU's Global Center for Academic and Spiritual Life; Faith Zone training subsequently adopted nationally.

Jewish communal institutions in the Arabian Gulf (2019–2024)

Chief Rabbi, Jewish Council of the Emirates (2019–2023); inaugural Chief Rabbi, Moses ben Maimon Synagogue, Abrahamic Family House (2023–2024); co-founder and Honorary Chair, Association of Gulf Jewish Communities (2021). Abrahamic Family House has welcomed 250,000+ visitors cumulatively.

Center for the Study of Antisemitism, NYU (2024)

Conceived center and raised more than $4.5 million over two years to establish it.

Jewish Learning Fellowship (2007)

Founded ten-week course in Jewish thought; subsequently adopted and scaled nationally by Hillel International. Raised $1.5 million in start-up and growth funding (2007–2012).

Extremism Examined, NYU (2023–present)

Designed and leads six-month undergraduate course with place-based study across the United States, Israel, UAE and Europe.

Collegiate Leadership Internship Program

Designed program placing approximately 70 students annually in New York Jewish nonprofits, funded by UJA-Federation of New York.

Downtown Va'ad (2015)

Founder; led campaign to establish an eruv in Lower Manhattan.

Jewish Disaster Response Corps

Founded and led organization until its merger into NECHAMA.

Other initiatives

The Downtown Minyan; Open Tent; Knock Knock Give a Sock (founder or co-founder).

PRIOR APPOINTMENTS

Senior Religious Advisor, Moses ben Maimon Synagogue, Abrahamic Family House, Abu Dhabi, 2024–2025

Inaugural Chief Rabbi, Moses ben Maimon Synagogue, Abrahamic Family House, Abu Dhabi, 2023–2024

Chief Rabbi, Jewish Council of the Emirates, 2019–2023

Instructor, NYU Abu Dhabi, January 2022; June 2023; June 2024

Faculty, Campus Commons, The Bronfman Fellowship, 2026–2027; Faculty, The Bronfman Fellowship, 2012–2026

Manager of Religious Life, Bronfman Center, NYU, 2002–2012

Faculty, Honors Talmud and Bible, Yeshiva University High School, 2000–2012

Assistant Rabbi, Hebrew Institute of Riverdale, 2001–2002

RESEARCH, GRANTS AND PROFESSIONAL PROJECTS

Principal Investigator, New York City Cultural Institutions as Post-October 7th Targets, with companion Governance Toolkit, NYU, 2026

Chair, Warm Peace Institute, Bronfman Center, NYU, $300,000, 2020–2022

Co-Founder, Institute for Impact and Intrapreneurship, Bronfman Center, NYU, 2018–present

Chair, Applied Research Collective for American Jewry, Bronfman Center, NYU, $800,000, 2018–2020

Member, Mapping Jewish Chaplaincy Strategic Planning Group, Brandeis University, 2021–2022

Member, Countering Violent Extremism Through Arts and Culture, UAE Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development, 2019–2020

Member, Orthodox Forum Steering Committee, Yeshiva University, 2012–2015

PUBLICATIONS — EDITED VOLUMES

New Paradigms for North American Jewry, 2 vols., Applied Research Collective for American Jewry, NYU, 2019 and 2020.

Toward a Jewish Perspective on Culture, Orthodox Forum Series, Yeshiva University Press and KTAV, 2013.

The Koren Shabbat Evening Siddur, edited with Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, Koren, 2011.

PUBLICATIONS — CHAPTERS AND FOREWORD

"The Freedom of Speech and the Obligation to Listen," in Pluralism in Peril, Aspen Institute, 2018, pp. 117–124.

"Actually Jewish: How Young American Jews See Their Status and How Orthodox Rabbis Respond," in Conversion, Intermarriage, and Jewish Identity, 2015.

"The End of the Middle of the Road: Re-envisioning Modern Orthodoxy for the Twenty-first Century," in The Next Generation of Modern Orthodoxy, 2012, pp. 332–349.

Foreword, Warm Peace: How People-to-People Diplomacy Can Build What Governments Cannot, 2021.

SELECTED PUBLIC WRITING

"Here's How to Build Jewish Life in a 21st-Century Muslim Nation," USA Today, August 11, 2021.

"What I've Learned Teaching Jewish Texts in the UAE," Jewish News Syndicate, March 23, 2021.

"We Are Guests in the UAE; Let's Be Gracious," Jewish News Syndicate, January 18, 2021.

"How I Became Chief Rabbi of the UAE and Why That Matters to Global Jewry," Times of Israel, August 21, 2020.

"Chief Rabbi of UAE: Reflections on a Historic Accord," Philadelphia Jewish Exponent, September 17, 2020.

"The Danger in Sears Judaism," eJewishPhilanthropy, October 21, 2018.

"At NYU, Interfaith Solidarity Abounds," The Forward, December 23, 2016.

TEACHING

Taub Seminar: Sustaining Minority Communities — The Jewish Community, NYU Wagner, Spring 2023 and 2025

Lead With a Story: How to Change the World through Public Narrative, NYU Abu Dhabi, January 2022; June 2023; June 2024

Multi-Faith Leadership in the 21st Century, co-taught with Imam Khalid Latif, NYU Wagner, 2012–2023

The American Jewish Community, NYU Wagner

Legal and Philosophical Approaches to Judaism, NYU Wagner, 2012–2015

Independent Studies, NYU Gallatin, 2004–2010

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Certificate in Heritage Conservation Innovation and Entrepreneurship, with Ben-Gurion University KEDEM Program, NYU Abu Dhabi, 2023

EdD track in Campus Religious Life, NYU Steinhardt, 2018–2019

Certificate in Multifaith Leadership in Higher Education, NYU Steinhardt, 2018–2020

Certificate in Spiritual Leadership and Social Impact, Bronfman Center and Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, 2018–2019

Entrepreneurship Lab and Certificate for Human Trafficking Survivors, Bronfman Center and Restore NYC, 2019

Of Many Institute training modules: Faith Zone (NASPA Award), 2017; Beloved Community, 2019; Jewish Ally Zone, 2020

BOARDS AND ADVISORY APPOINTMENTS

Inaugural Advisory Board, ADL Center for Antisemitism Research, 2026–present

Board, Center for Critical Education on Antisemitism, University of Würzburg, 2026–present

Senior Advisor to the President of NYU on institutional responses to antisemitism

AJC New York Regional Board, 2021–present

Founding Member, Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council, 2016–present

Community Relations Working Group, UJA-Federation of New York, 2019–2020

HONORS

Distinguished Problem of Practice Award, NYU Steinhardt, 2026

Honoree, AJC New York Benefit, 2024

Profile, “Moving History Forward,” Yeshiva University Magazine, 2022

Alumnus of the Year, Yeshivat Har Etzion, 2013

Juliet Hollister Award, Temple of Understanding, 2012

Hallmark Award, NYU, 2010

36 Under 36 Changemakers, New York Jewish Week, 2009

Educator of the Year, Orthodox Union and JLIC, 2009

Exemplar of Excellence, Hillel International, 2008

FILM AND MEDIA

Torn: The Israel-Palestine Poster War on NYC Streets, contributor, 2025; Best Documentary, New York Emmy Awards, 2026

Amen. Amen. Amen., subject, 2021; broadcast on PBS

Of Many, principal subject, 2014; Tribeca Film Festival; ABC broadcast in 2017 (8.1 million viewers)

Of Many: Then and Now, contributor

Millennial Perspectives, Jewish Broadcasting Service, host, 2016–present

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND LANGUAGES

Conference of European Rabbis (2019–present); Rabbinical Council of America (2014–present); International Rabbinic Fellowship (2012–2020).

English and Hebrew (fluent); French (proficient); Yiddish (basic).