



Charlotte Fonrobert and David Biale

the eminent historian David Biale of SUNY Binghamton for the Koret Chair and as director of the Center. Professor Biale sought to expand CJS academic offerings and encouraged the local Jewish community to assume “ownership” of the Center, rather than leaning so heavily on the GTU member schools for financial support. CJS found more than a few such admirers and supporters; in 1998, the Center was renamed in honor one of its oldest and most loyal friends, Richard S. Dinner, who died that year.

With his extensive list of publications and growing visibility, Professor Biale was well positioned to solidify the academic connections between CJS and other Jewish studies programs being developed at neighboring institutions, particularly at UCB. In describing the CJS mission in 1991, Biale noted that the Center undertook not only to prepare students for advanced degrees in Jewish studies and serve the larger GTU and Bay Area communities by offering programs in Jewish and interreligious subjects, but also “to work cooperatively with the programs at UCB and Stanford to create a Bay Area-wide Jewish studies community with national and international standing.”

1995 saw the fruit of some of Professor Biale’s most inspired efforts, with the launching of the Joint Doctoral Program (JDP) in Jewish Studies at the Graduate Theological Union and the University of California, Berkeley. For the nearly two decades of its existence (it was dissolved in 2011), the JDP was among the most highly regarded Jewish studies doctoral programs in the world, attracting international applicants eager to study in a program famous both for its academic rigor and for its interest in some of the newest and most exciting methodologies and approaches

Taube Gift Expands Conference and Learning Possibilities

Thanks to a generous gift from the Taube Family Fund, the GTU has established the Taube Conference Center, providing upgraded space for conferences and other events that opens the GTU’s rich educational and interreligious opportunities to the wider public. The gift also enables the GTU to expand its commitment to flexible learning environments by upgrading existing classrooms and study rooms. The improved spaces will be equipped with technology similar to that of the Collaborative Learning Space in the GTU Library, which has been in high demand since it opened in January 2017.

Both the Hedco Room at 2465 Le Conte Avenue and the Conference Room on the second floor of the library will be upgraded to provide more flexible learning spaces for smaller groups, with movable furniture, video conferencing capabilities, and touch-screen displays. The Collaborative Learning Space will be augmented with a two-camera video conferencing system. Two study rooms on the first floor of the Library will be equipped with new furniture and built-in displays. Other rooms on campus will also see upgrades in technology. Dr. Kyle Schiefelbein-Guerrero, director of digital learning and lecturer in theology & educational technology, is spearheading the renewal of these conference and classroom spaces.

Thank you to the Taube Family Fund for their generous gift, which will help provide state-of-the-art learning technologies and conference capabilities at the GTU. ♦

