Jewish Nonprofit Management > Jewish Communal Service

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Earlier today, the HUC-JIR school of Jewish Communal Service was relaunched as the **School for Jewish Nonprofit Management**. EJewish Philanthropy **reports** that

> it is the only graduate program of its kind that is embedded within a Jewish institution of higher learning and enjoys a special partnership with its neighbor, the University of Southern California. Students at the SJNM receive a cutting-edge education in nonprofit management grounded in Jewish history and values, as well as the opportunity to earn one of five dual degrees at USC.

Earlier this year, HUC-JIR student Carly Brown submitted her thesis, "**Informing a Branding Strategy: A Competitive Analysis for the School of Jewish Communal Service**" in which she analyzed three other, competing, dual-degree Jewish studies nonprofit management studies programs (including **our own** here at NYU Wagner). Her study included a detailed consideration of the naming/branding issue.

> SJCS needs to pay particular attention to how it markets and brands its new name to potential Social Work students so that they do not feel alienated by the term “management.” In speaking with current SJCS students, who were also enrolled in the dual degree Social Work program at USC, many of them felt that the term “management” did not encompass the skills that they were aiming to obtain in their graduate program.

In an earlier blog entry, I explored whether the **Jewish fundraiser was the new Jewish social worker**, in terms of the Jewish community's concern about educating and nurturing these communal professionals. The renaming of HUC-JIR's academic program for Jewish communal professionals certainly seems to support the idea that the Jewish community is moving from a social work focus to a management orientation.

Predictably, perhaps, Brown found that "Generally, students in favor of the name change were dual degree students at USC earning an MPA, while those who were more tentative about it were dual Master students at USC in the School of Social Work." In fact, some students expressed strong distaste for the language of 'service':

> She was turned off by the use of “service” in the title of SJCS; she felt that it reminded her of “servitude” and made her think of “the Federation worker, but not so much the person who is going to run the institution.”... [A community influencer] further explained “the words themselves, [referring to the name SJCS] are seen as being a servant, or diminishing,” and that the new name would be great for the school if it was “truly indicative of a new focus” and not just a cosmetic change.

Of course the Jewish community needs, and has always needed, managers *and* non-managers and HUC-JIR is continuing to offer the programs to train both.

Whether the new name is indicative of a new focus or a cosmetic change, is moving from the discourse of 'service' to 'management' good for the Jewish community? Is it actually a positive expression of Jewish values? Will it bring greater professionalism to Jewish communal organization, or just greater commercialization? If someone's working on a thesis on this question, please send it our way!