 **Date:** Sep. 2015

Course Name and Number:

**Topics in the Bible - Parasha**

**Type of course:** Lecture

**Year of Studies:** 2015-2016 **Semester:** Fall & Spring  **Hours/credits:** 2

**The primary objective** of this course is to introduce students to what is actually written in the Torah. This is not a text based class where we will be delving into a particular verse and analyzing it from all angles; rather, we will conduct an overview of each Parasha, discussing every key event/statement that occurs. The goal is to know what the Torah actually says by going piece-by-piece through each section.

**The secondary objective** of the course is to examine how the different Rishonim and Achronim understand the narrative, with extra emphasis on Rashi’s approach. Questions on the Peshat are encouraged at all points of the lecture in order to obtain a clear understanding of the Torah. We will also study some inspirational ideas from later commentators that relate to the text and our generation.

The first semester we will start from Parashat Noah and conclude with the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai.

**Course Description:**

In each lecture we will go section by section through the weekly Torah portion, discussing all the key points and main explanations given by the Rishonim and Achronim. Time will be alotted for questions at all points of the lecture.

**The Process of the Course:**

**(Teaching Methods, use of technology, Guest Speakers)** :

Each week a notebook or notes must be handed in or e-mailed summarizing the previous week’s Parasha lecture. Attendance and participation are also a major part of this course.

**Detailed Lesson plan:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Comment** | **Required Reading** | **Topic of the Lesson** | **Number of Lesson** |
| This lecture will give a brief overview of the written Torah and Parashat Bereshit, we will then focus in depth on Parashat Noach  | Mikraot Gedolot, Yud Alef Peushim all Rashi, various Achronim, Midrash Rabbah, Midrash Tanchuma, Yalkut Shimoni, Gemarah Sanhedrin | Intro and Parashat Noach | 1 |
| Focus on the parasha | Mikraot Gedolot, Yud Alef Peushim all Rashi, various Achronim, Midrash Rabbah, Midrash Tanchuma, Yalkut Shimoni, | Parashat Lech Lecha | 2  |
| Focus on the parasha | Mikraot Gedolot, Yud Alef Peushim all Rashi, various achronim | Parashat Vayera | 3 |
| Focus on the parasha  | Mikraot Gedolot, Yud Alef Peushim all Rashi, various Achronim, Midrash Rabbah, Midrash Tanchuma, Yalkut Shimoni, | Parashat Chayei Sarah | 4  |
| Focus on the parasha | Mikraot Gedolot, Yud Alef Peushim all Rashi, various Achronim, Midrash Rabbah, Midrash Tanchuma, Yalkut Shimoni, | Parashat Toledot  | 5  |
| Focus on the parasha | Mikraot Gedolot, Yud Alef Peushim all Rashi, various Achronim, Midrash Rabbah, Midrash Tanchuma, Yalkut Shimoni, | Midterm and Parashat Vayetzeh and Parashat Vayishlach | 6  |
| Focus on the parasha | Mikraot Gedolot, Yud Alef Peushim all Rashi, various Achronim, Midrash Rabbah, Midrash Tanchuma, Yalkut Shimoni, | Parashat Vayeshev and Parashat Miketz  | 7  |
| Focus on the parasha | Mikraot Gedolot, Yud Alef Peushim all Rashi, various Achronim, Midrash Rabbah, Midrash Tanchuma, Yalkut Shimoni, | Parashat Vayigash and Parashat Vayechi | 8  |
| Focus on the parasha | Mikraot Gedolot, Yud Alef Peushim all Rashi, various Achronim, Midrash Rabbah, Midrash Tanchuma, Yalkut Shimoni, | Parashat Shemot and Parashat Vaera | 9  |
| Focus on the parasha | Mikraot Gedolot, Yud Alef Peushim all Rashi, various Achronim, Midrash Rabbah, Midrash Tanchuma, Yalkut Shimoni, | Parashat Bo and Parashat Beshalach | 10  |
| Focus on the parasha | Mikraot Gedolot, Yud Alef Peushim all Rashi, various Achronim, Midrash Rabbah, Midrash Tanchuma, Yalkut Shimoni, | Parashat Yitro | 11  |
|  |  | Cumulative Final | 12  |

**Course requirements**

**Class Attendance and Participation:**

You are expected to attend class sessions regularly. You are allowed to miss a maximum of 2 classes a semester before losing points.

The criteria for grading class participation are as follows: Each class will be out of 5 points. You will earn 5 points if you participate frequently in class discussions; 4 points if you participate sporadically in class discussions; 3 points if you are awake; 2 points if you attend class and never participate and no points if you do not attend. At the end of the semester the lowest two grades are dropped before taking the average.

**Assignments:**

Each week a notebook or notes must be handed in summarizing the previous week’s Parasha lecture. (Notes can be typed up and e-mailed to me but no typing during lecture) The criteria for grading class assignments are as follows: Each assignment is out of 3 points. You will earn 3 points if you mention all the main points said in class, 2 if you get most of them, 1 if you are missing key sections. The lowest 2 scores will be dropped at the end of the semester.

**Midterm and Final:**

There will be one midterm half way through the semester and a cumulative final at the end.

**Grade Components**

Attendance - 20 % (you can miss 2 classes)

Exam 1 - 30 % (you will be penalized for a late exam)

Final – 50 %

#### Bibliography: (Required/ Elective)

Mikraot Gedolot, Yud Alef Peushim all Rashi, Midrash Rabbah, Midrash Tanchuma, Yalkut Shimoni, Gemarot that explain the peshat Sefer Hachinuch, various Rishonim and Achronim,

**Required textbooks, other textbooks**

English/Hebrew Chumash

**Required material for the final**

Class notes, outlines, optional review class