 **Date:** April 2013

Course Name:

Fundamentals of Judaism I and II

**Type of course:** Lecture

**Year of Studies:** 2013-2014 **Semester:** Fall & Spring  **Hours/credits:** 2

**Course Description:**

We will examine many concepts central to Judaism, using sources from the Bible, Talmud Bavli and important ancient and contemporary commentators

**Topics will include:**

1. Marriage: Life goals, making a commitment, qualities to look for, how to have a good fight, intimacy

Genesis 2.18, Talmud Bavli and various Midrashic sources

1. Judaism and War

Talmud Bavli, Rambam, Rabbenu Yonah, and contemporary halachic sources

1. Business ethics: Fraud, price gauging, employer-employee relations, going to court, “The law of the land is the law”

Talmud Bavli, Shulchan Aruch, Rabbenu Bachaya and halachic sources

1. The Messiah: Who and when

Talmud Bavli, the Vilna Gaon, and Kol HaTor,

1. Cigarettes and drugs

Talmud Bavli, Shulchan Aruch, Rav Moshe Feinstein and other contemporary halachic sources

1. Chosen people: Is Judaism Racist?

Talmud Bavli, Rashi, Rav Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzato (“The Way of G-d”)

1. Where was G-d during the Holocaust?

Talmud Bavli, Midrash Rabbi, Yalkut Shmoni, Rabbi Moshe Cordovero, Sefer HaChinuch

**Course requirements**

* Regular attendance – a maximum of two absences will be allowed per semester, including absence due to illness. Excessive absences will result either in lowering of your course grade, or in no credit for the course.
* Two late appearances will constitute one absence.
* Participation in class discussion.
* There will be monthly quizzes and a midterm examination.
* The final exam will be consist of short essay questions.

**Required textbooks, other textbooks**

The texts, in both Hebrew and English translation, will be handed out in class.