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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Interfaith Cooperation Benefits Soviet Jews in the 1970s:
Rutgers Bildner Center Launches Spring Public Programs
on February 16**

NEW BRUNSWICK/PISCATAWAY, N.J. – The movement to free Soviet Jews in the 1970s and 1980s galvanized the American Jewish community. An interfaith coalition was formed through the efforts of Sisters Ann Gillen and Margaret Traxler, longtime activists on behalf of Soviet Jewry, and the American Jewish Committee. Fred A. Lazin, the Lynn and Lloyd Hurst Family Professor of Local Government at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, will discuss interfaith cooperation as a model for social justice within the broader context of the Soviet Jewry Movement and Jewish-Christian relations in the United States.

The February 16th lecture will be held at 7 p.m. at the Rutgers Student Center, located at 126 College Avenue in New Brunswick. The talk is sponsored by the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life at Rutgers University and is free and open to the public. Advance registration is requested.

Lazin is the Seymour & Lillian Abenshohn Visiting Professor of Israel Studies at American University this year. In 2005, he received the Israel Political Science Association's award for outstanding English language book on politics for his book *The Struggle for Soviet Jewry in American Politics: Israel versus the American Jewish Establishment*. Lazin is currently researching the role of the American Jewish Committee in the struggle for Soviet Jewry, including its lobbying efforts in Washington and its ties with Israel.

For more information on the Bildner Center's programs, visit jewishstudies.rutgers.edu. To RSVP, email csjlrsvp@rci.rutgers.edu or call 732-932-2033. The Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life connects the university with the community through public lectures, symposia, Jewish communal initiatives, cultural events, and teacher training.