The Politics of the Middle East: Israeli Politics & Society

The course will address the main issues in Israeli politics and society from the establishment of the state through the late 1990s. We will begin with an overview of the local, international, and historical context of the Israeli state. Move on to the state formation and study the structure of its political institutions. We will explore the focal elements of Israel's political system, and concentrate on the following: (1) Parties, the electoral system and state institutions. (2) Political leadership and political elite. (3) Political behavior. During the second part of the course we will explore the major social divisions in Israeli society, which include: (1) The Ethnic Divide. (2) The Religious Divide. (3) The National Divide. (4) War and Israeli Society and Politics. (5) The Gender Divide. (6) The Migrant workers effect. Finally, we will examine the future challenges to Israeli society and politics. Throughout the course, we will focus on the relationship between state institutions, on the one hand, and social groups, movements, and institutions, on the other hand.

Format of the Course: Lecture combined with Discussion

Course Objectives

- The aim of the class is to provide students with a sense of contemporary artistic production in Israel in its broader contexts; to familiarize them with the practice of close readings of artistic texts; and to introduce them to topics in contemporary literary and cultural studies: the relationship between power and alternative representations, and the emphasis on the experience of the body in discussions of these cultural structures and practices.

Grading and Assessment

- Two critical essays on course readings, 2 pages long (from the entire required reading list) will account for 40% of your final grade. These essays should be submitted in e-copy prior to the beginning of each class (See Syllabus appendix for further instructions).
- Class Participation will account for 5% of your final grade.
  1. Students will be divided into groups. Each group will be required to lead
the discussion once during the course. This will include preparing a short presentation (up to 20 minutes) of the relevant readings and preparing questions for the discussion to follow. Each presentation, which will be sent to me beforehand, and will be posted on the course website prior to class.

- Final Paper – 55% of the final grade paper is fine but the ratio need to change, your critical essays can count instead of a midterm, but they should count for more

### Eligibility for Final grade is composed of:
1. Submitting 2 critical essays with a passing grade.
2. Taking part in the class presentation.

### Important Dates and Deadlines
- Last date to submit first critical essay is **Week 5**.
- Last date to submit second (and last) critical essay is **Week 10**.

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**Session 1**

[Enter date]

**State Formation and National Institutions**
- The Proclamation of Independence [http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/megilat_eng.htm](http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/megilat_eng.htm)

**Suggested Readings:**

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**Session 2**

[Enter date]

**Society Formation**
Session 3

**Political Leadership and Political Elite**

**Suggested Readings:**

**Session 4**

**The Electoral System, State Institutions, and Parties**

**Suggested Readings:**

- Last Date to Approve Paper topic is Week 4.

**Session 5**

**Political Behavior**

**Suggested Readings:**

- Last date to submit first critical essay is Week 5.
Ethnic Divide: Mizrachim and Ashkenazim


Suggested Readings:

The Religious Divide: Secular and Religious Jews


Suggested Readings:
- Liebman S. Charles. 1993. “Religion and Democracy in Israel”. In Sprinzak Ehud and Diamond Larry (Eds.) *Israeli Democracy Under Stress*. Boulder,
The National Divide: Jews and Arabs


Suggested Readings:

**Session 9**

**War, Israeli Society and Politics**


**Suggested Readings:**


**Last Date to Submit Paper Abstract is Week 9.**

**Session 10**

**Women in Israel**


**Suggested Readings:**


**Last date to submit second critical essay is Week 10.**

### Migrant Workers


### Suggested Readings:

- Harper Robin and Hani Zubida. Making Room at the Table: Incorporation of Foreign Workers in Israel. **Policy and Society**. (Forthcoming)


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**Final Papers Presentations**

Each student will prepare a Power Point presentation of the final paper they wrote for the course. Each student will present her paper to the group and we will engage in Q&A for each paper.

Presentations should be about 15 minute long and we will have 15 minutes of Q&A session for each paper.

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**Session 13**

[Enter date]

**Final Papers Presentations**

Each student will prepare a Power Point presentation of the final paper they wrote for the course. Each student will present her paper to the group and we will engage in Q&A for each paper.

Presentations should be about 15 minute long and we will have 15 minutes of Q&A session for each paper.

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**Session 14**

[Enter date]

**Conclusions: Challenges for the Future**


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**Final Exam/Project**

[Enter date]

**Paper Outline and Final Paper Guide**

- **Last Date to Approve Paper topic is Week 4.**

Each student should submit a research questions with up to 500 words of explanation of the topic and their research method. One hard copy should be submitted in class no later than week 5 and an ELECTRONIC copy to my email as well.

- **Last Date to Submit Paper Abstract is Week 9.**

What do we have to write in the paper Outline?

Your outline should provide answers to 4 basic questions:

1. What do you want to know? (specific problem or issue, research questions)
2. Why do you want to know it? Why should anyone care what you find?
What difference does it make?

3. What do you think the answer is, what are your hypothesis, what is your theory? Be sure to spell out the reasoning behind your hypothesis and the logical connections between them.

4. How do you intend to solve the puzzle? (Research design)

Each answer should be about one to two paragraphs long.

The outline should be written in essay format, **about 2 to 3 pages long**, font 12 double spaced and include the annotated bibliography.

The paper outline is the basis for the final paper.

Annotated bibliography should include full reference of the item and its relevance to your work.

The Final Paper would be 3500 to 4000 words (That is between 10 to 15 pages long) **NO MORE NO LESS**. It should be based on the approved topic and the submitted outline, and will include all the necessary parts of an academic paper.

**Preparing Your Written Critical Essays**

**Essays will be done only on items from the required list**

Your written essays should be 2 pages long, double spaced, font 12. The essay should discuss one of the readings from the given list for the relevant week, and submitted **ONLY** before the class of the relevant week.

1. Essays from the required reading list of the upcoming week will be submitted at the Assignment Room by no later than Tuesday 14:00PM.

2. Late essays or essays that are not part of the upcoming week required list will not be graded.

3. **Submissions of critical essays for readings from topics that were discussed in class or recitation will NOT be accepted.**

4. **Critical essays will be accepted only for reading items 10 pages and up!!!**

5. Last date to submit first critical essay is **Week 5**.

6. Last date to submit second (and last) critical essay is **Week 10**.

7. Citations must be used and a bibliography must be provided.

Critical Essays should consist of the following elements:

1. Bibliographic Information – Title, Author/s, Name of Journal, Year.
2. Short Summary – main research question/s, theoretical perspective, methods and data, main findings.

3. Evaluation – main strengths and main weaknesses (This article is badly written, or I did not understand what the author/s wrote is not a valid criticism).

- This requirement is to be done and evaluated individually.
- This requirement should be done exactly according to the above information; no exceptions.