Overview

Although a relatively young country, Israel’s politics are rich and dynamic. Some might say that they are contentious and Byzantine. We will explore the ideological and institutional foundations of the Israeli political system, and we will examine some of the key issues in Israeli politics.

While Israel’s conflict with its neighbors is critically important to Israel’s politics, that will not be the focus of this course. This does not deny the conflict’s importance: on the contrary, the conflict deserves attention in a course of its own. Not to worry, there is enough excitement and conflict in Israeli politics to keep everyone’s attention.

We will examine Israel as an academic exercise. We will treat Israel as we would any other country of interest to social scientists. As a result, we will examine the multiple among social scientists. Some of the positions you will agree with and some you will not. That is fine. You are to approach everything you read and discuss in this class critically. I expect you to accept none of the assigned material on its face.

What is expected of students?

Students will be expected to read, think, criticize and form arguments. That means that students must keep up to date with all reading assignments and attend class regularly. Students must be fully prepared at all times to discuss the readings and concepts from previous class sessions.

Students with Disabilities

Carleton College is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Services office (Burton Hall 03) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, autism spectrum disorders, chronic health, traumatic brain injury and concussions, sensory, or physical), please contact Chris Dallager, Director of Disability Services, by calling 507-222-5250 or sending an email to cdallager@carleton.edu to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.
**Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is demanded in a college community. The life of the mind requires precision in attribution and authorship of work. "Dishonesty in academic work, particularly in the form of plagiarism, also defeats the process of self-discovery which is the heart of a liberal education."

Students must familiarize themselves with the Web site "Academic Integrity in the Writing of Essays and Other Papers" (from which the above quotation is taken) which is maintained by the office of the dean of the college. Students are assumed to be familiar to rules and procedures of the college found in the Student Handbook, which is located here: [https://apps.carleton.edu/handbook/academics/?a=student&policy_id=21359](https://apps.carleton.edu/handbook/academics/?a=student&policy_id=21359).

**Electronics Policy**

The use of computers for any purpose other than taking notes or reading electronic version of text or readings, and the use of any other devices are strictly prohibited. Students found using computers for any other purpose risks my banning the use of any electronic devises for the entire class for the remainder of the term.

**Course Requirements**

Debate (Either Balfour or 1947 Partition) (20%)

Simulation Exercise (20%): At the end of the course, we will have a mock constitutional convention in which students will debate and decide on a number of key reforms to Israel’s political system. Details to follow.

Literature Review Paper (20%) Each student will choose a topic related to Israeli politics and will write a literature review paper comparing the competing perspectives on that topic by scholars.

Final Exam (35 %): There will be a self-scheduled Final Exam. Please check with the registrar’s office for places and times.

Participation (5 %): All students are expected to come to class having already read the assigned materials and prepared to discuss them. Students who do not read the materials and/or do not attend class sessions will not succeed in this course.

**Grading**

I will be using the following grading scale in this course:
Absences

More than two unexcused absences over the course of the term will result in a reduction of one-half grade per absence. I will take attendance at the beginning of each class. You will only be marked as present if you are in class when attendance is taken. Students are expected to take exams when they are scheduled. Exceptions to this rule will be made in only the most EXTRAORDINARY circumstances.

Late Papers, Late Assignments and Missed Exams

Late papers and other assignments will not be accepted unless there is documentation of an acceptable excuse.

Communication with Professor Daves

This course will utilize Moodle to help facilitate communication between me and the class and among students. I will post new and critical information and new materials for the course on this website. It is the responsibility of each student to consult Moodle regularly. Failure to do so will result in difficulties in keeping in touch with me and staying current with any changes that there might be to the schedule of the syllabus. I assume that information posted on Moodle is seen by all students. I will give sufficient time for students to consult Moodle for additions or changes to any aspect of the course. I will have office hours to meet students who need to speak with me. Also, you can contact me via email.

Books

The following books have been ordered and are available at the bookstore. You can also purchase books through any online bookseller; however, students should be sure to have the books in time to complete reading assignments.
Jewish Publication Society: 1997

Avineri, Shlomo The Making of Modern Zionism: Basic Books 2017

Sasley, Brent and Waller, Harold M. Politics in Israel: Oxford University Press 2016

Ghanem, As’ad The Palestinian Minority in Israel :SUNY Press 2001

Reading Assignments

Week 1

Can we compare Israel to other countries? (9/14)

- Sasley and Waller Ch. 1

Week 2
(NO CLASS 9/21)
What’s it all About: Ideological Foundations of Israeli Politics (9/19)

  Introduction
  Sasley and Waller Ch. 2

Week 3

Ideological Foundations of Israeli Politics: Competing Currents of Zionism (9/26)

- Avineri, Shlomo The Making of Modern Zionism
Introduction, Chapters on Hess, Herzl, HaAm, Syrkin, Jabotinsky, and Ben Gurion

Historical Background (9/28) Debate on Balfour Declaration

- Historical Documents:
  - Balfour Declaration: http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/balfour.asp
  - Hussein McMahon Correspondence: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/hussmac1.htm
  - Mandate for Palestine: http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/palmanda.asp

Week 4

The State, Constitution and Institutions of Government I (Oct 3)

- Sasley and Waller Chps. 3,4

The State, Constitution and Institutions of Government I (Oct 5)

- Sasley and Waller Chps. 12-14
- Constitutional Documents
  - Israeli Declaration of Independence: https://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/megilat_eng.htm

Week 5
Debate on Partition of Palestine (10/10)

Electoral System (10/12)

- Sasley and Waller Ch. 8
- Lim, Kevjm, “Neither Left nor Right but Backwards: The Failure of Centrist Parties in Israel and their Relationship to the Multiparty System” *Israel Affairs* Vol. 15 No. 1 January 2009

Week 6

Political Parties and Voting Behavior (10/17)

- Sasley and Waller Chps. 9-10

The European / Non-European Split (10/19)


Week 7

Religion and Politics (10/24)

- Sasley and Waller, Ch.6
- Shelef, Nadav “Politicized Secularism in Israel” *Contemporary Jewry* Vol 30 No. 1, 2010

Political Economy (10/26)

- Sasley and Waller, Ch. 15
Week 8

Palestinian Citizens of Israel (10/31, 11/2)

- Ghanem, As’ad *The Palestinian Minority in Israel* Ch. 1-6

Week 9

**Jewish, Democratic, Ethnocracy?**

- Additional readings TBA

**MOCK CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION NOV 9**

Week 10

Wrap-up