Israel: Society and Politics – GOV365N

Fall 2011

Meets: T;TH 8:00AM- 9:30AM MEZ B0.306
(unique: 38799)

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Course Description

The course will offer an introduction to the study of Israel, with special emphasis on the intersection of society and politics. We will discuss the history of Israel, its political system, and its political culture. We will then analyze the main social divisions in the country and the way they are manifested in the political and policy arenas. The academic goal of the course is to gain an understanding of the historical, social, and political factors that underlie contemporary Israeli politics and society.

Course Requirements
All students are expected to attend class regularly (at least 80 percent of the sessions) and actively participate in class discussion and activities.

**Composition of Final Grade**

Class attendance – 10%

Four short exams – 10% each (40%)

Midterm (Thursday, October 20, in class) – 20%

Final exam (Saturday, December 10, 2–5 PM) – 30%

**Format and Procedures**

This class meets twice a week for 1½ hour sessions. Please plan to arrive a few moments before class begins. Course lectures will be related to the readings; they will not replace or reiterate them. Students can expect to spend 2-3 hours reading/writing for every hour of class. You are responsible for reading all of the assigned material.

We strongly believe every student is capable of learning the material presented in this course, but the responsibility to make the required effort rests on you. We want to reward hard work and dedication, not just an ability to take tests. Therefore, the course is structured so that attendance of lectures and thoughtful reading of the text constitute a significant part of the grade.

**Some Further Information**

Do’s and Don’ts:

Tell me if you require special attention for any reason.

Feel free to come and introduce yourself during office hours. This is extremely important for students who are or will be interested in letters of recommendation.

Be active in class, express your opinions, ask questions and don’t hesitate to express your opinions.

Work hard during the semester.
Don’t hesitate to jump on opportunities for extra credit.

Don’t be late to class.

Don’t text, email or browse the web while in class.

Don’t fall asleep in class.

Don’t wait till the night before an exam to ask for rescheduling.

Don’t be disrespectful to me or to the TA.

Don’t ask for letters of recommendations if you don’t make sure that I know your qualities.

Information about Audio-Visual materials

I regularly use audiovisual materials in class. It is essential. Some students are sensitive to some of these materials. Please be advised that I do my best to include the most proper materials for communicating a specific topic. I do my best to avoid showing materials that could be considered offensive. If you feel uncomfortable with such materials, please let me know and I will excuse you from watching them.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, [http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssp](http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssp)

The University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Notice regarding accommodations for religious holidays
By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Emergency Evacuation Policy

In the event of a fire or other emergency, it may be necessary to evacuate a building rapidly. Upon the activation of a fire alarm or the announcement of an emergency in a university building, all occupants of the building are required to evacuate and assemble outside. Once evacuated, no one may re-enter the building without instruction to do so from the Austin Fire Department, University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Students should familiarize themselves with all the exit doors of each room and building they occupy at the university, and should remember that the nearest exit routes may not be the same as the way they typically enter buildings.

Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructors in writing during the first week of class. Faculty members must then provide this information to the Fire Prevention Services office by fax (512-232-2759), with "Attn. Mr. Roosevelt Easley" written in the subject line.

Information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at http://www.utexas.edu/emergency

Grading Scale

93-100 = A
90-92 = A-
87-89 = B+
83-86 = B
80-82 = B-
Course Readings

TOPIC 1: INTRODUCTION TO ISRAEL AND THE ISRAELI POLITICAL SYSTEM


TOPIC 2: ZIONISM AND THE ORIGINS OF THE ISRAELI POLITICAL SYSTEM


TOPIC 3: THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE ISRAELI POLITICAL CULTURE


TOPIC 4: THE DEBATE OVER THE DEMOCRATIC TRAITS OF ISRAEL


TOPIC 5: GOVERNMENT, PARLIAMENT AND THE COURTS


TOPIC 6: NATION IN ARMS


TOPIC 7: THE ARAB MINORITY AND THE JEWISH STATE


TOPIC 8: LEFT AND RIGHT


TOPIC 9: RELIGION AND POLITICS


TOPIC 10: THE OVERLAP OF THE ETHNIC AND ECONOMIC CLEAVAGES


TOPIC 11: ZIONISM AND POST ZIONISM – CHALLENGE OR EVOLUTION?