

**History, Politics, and Diplomacy of the Arab-Israeli Conflict/INTL4780**  
**University of Georgia, Fall Semester 2022**  
**Monday/Wednesday/Friday: 3:00-3:50**  
**Room: MLC 107**

Dr. Eli Sperling

Email: [eli.sperling@uga.org](mailto:eli.sperling@uga.org)

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 4:00-5:00, can also schedule Zoom meetings throughout the week, depending on my availability

Office Location: Candler 312

**Course Description:**

This course offers an engaging survey of the history, politics and diplomacy of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The course deals with the historical origins and development of the conflict from the Dawn of Zionist emigration to Palestine in the 1880s until the present. Coverage includes introductions to modern Jewish and Arab histories, evolution of Zionism and Arab nationalism, demise of the Ottoman Empire, and the operation and demise of the British Mandate in Palestine, political, social and economic aspects of the conflict, the Cold War in the region, the evolution of Palestinian national identity, and Arab-Israeli wars and clashes from the early 1950s to the present, the role of the UN in the conflict, American, and European successes and failures in mediating the conflict and Israeli and Palestinians' respective, domestic political consideration. The course will conclude by looking at Iran nuclear questions, new diplomatic breakthroughs in the region and the changing place of the Palestinian national cause in defining Israeli regional diplomatic constraints and opportunities.

**Course Goals—by the end of the semester, student will be able to:**

- Articulate a diverse range of sides/perspectives/opinions amongst actors in the conflict, their origins and their implications from the dawn of Zionist motivated immigration to Palestine until today
- Think critically, through the lens of reliable scholarly (and other) sources, about the Arab-Israeli conflict and its many developments
- Defend a written/spoken argument with quality and reputable sources, nuance
- Use the scholarly frameworks from the course to better understand and analyze other global conflict zones, diplomatic processes
- Analyze and speak about A-I related headlines in a critical, nuanced and non-polemical way

**Grading structure (out of 100 points total):**

- 35% (points) of final grade will be based on a take home final—the exam will consist of two essay questions, to be discussed in detail week 8 of the semester
- 30% (points) of grade will be based on an in-class midterm exam
- 20% (points) of grade will be based on five written assignments, each no longer than 3-pages, double-spaced. Dates of assignment are marked below. Each writing assignment will be 4 points of total grade.
- 15% (points) of grade will be based on personal contribution to an in-class, group presentation, to be discussed week 5 of the semester

**Grade scale (there is no rounding or curving of assignments or of final grades in this course):**

- A 93.00 and above
- A- 90.00 to 92.99
- B+ 87.00 to 89.99
- B 83.00 to 86.99
- B- 80.00 to 82.99
- C+ 77.00 to 79.99
- C 70 to 76.99
- D 65.00 to 69.99
- F 64.99 and below

**In-Class Discussion Guidelines:**

Civility and respect are essential when engaging in productive academic discourse. All communications for this course should be conducted constructively, civilly, and respectfully. Differences in beliefs, opinions, and approaches are to be expected. Please bring any communications you believe to be in violation of this policy to my attention. Active interaction with peers and your instructor is essential to success in this course, paying particular attention to the following:

- Be respectful of others and their opinions, valuing diversity in perspectives, backgrounds, abilities, and experiences.
- Challenging ideas, phenomena and the scholars that we engage with is integral to critical thinking and the scholarly process. Please articulate your written and verbal communications carefully and thoughtfully, recognizing that a positive atmosphere of healthy discourse is encouraged.

- It is important to do the reading! We will be discussing nuanced and often complicated circumstances. Being a productive member of in-class discussions means doing the reading and being prepared to talk about those assignments and how they relate to lectures and concepts discussed in class.

## **Week 1: Introduction**

**Goal—contextualize the origins of the two national movements withing broader nationalist developments in Europe and the Middle East**

### **August 17: Syllabus overview, goals and expectations of course**

- Khalidi, Rashid. *Palestinian Identity: the Construction of Modern National Consciousness*. Columbia University Press, 2010, pp. 35–62.
- Hertzberg, Arthur. *The Zionist Idea*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1997. 15-32.

### **August 19: How will we frame the conflict in this course? Why is methodology important?**

- Dawn, Ernest. “The Rise of Arabism in Syria,” *Middle East Journal* (1961), pp. 145-168.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso. 1983. Pp. 1-7, 37-47.

## **Week 2: The Great Powers and Palestine until the establishment of the British Mandate of Palestine**

**Goal—establish a clear understanding of ways in which the Great Powers, Zionists and Arabs cooperated and conflicted prior to Mandate period**

### **August 22: Ottoman Palestine**

- Hourani, Albert. "Ottoman Reform and Politics of Notables," *Beginning of Modernization in the Middle East* (1968), pp. 41-68.
- Muslih, Muhammad Y. *The Origins of Palestinian Nationalism*. Columbia University Press, 1988. pp. 1-9.

### **August 24: Zionist immigration to Palestine**

- Kolatt, Israel. "The Organization of the Jewish Population of Palestine and the Development of its Political Consciousness Before World War I," *Studies in Palestine During the Ottoman Period* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press), 1975, pp. 211-245.

### **August 26: WWI**

- Bickerton, Ian and Carla Klausner. *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 13-50
- Jonathan Schneer, *The Balfour Declaration: The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010), pp. 24-25.

### **Week 3: The British Mandate for Palestine, 1920-1948**

**Goal— establish a clear understanding of the respective Arab, British and Jewish national interests and actions in Palestine leading into WWII**

#### **August 29: The Beginning of the Mandate (Writing assignment)**

- Bickerton, Ian and Carla Klausner. *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 51-65
- Kolatt, Israel. "The Zionist Movement and the Arabs," *Studies in Zionism* (April 1982), pp. 129-157.

#### **August 31: The Position of the Arab Parties**

- Mattar, Philip. "The Mufti of Jerusalem and the Politics of Palestine," *Middle East Journal* 42:2 (Spring 1988), pp. 227-240.
- Nashif, Taysir. "Palestinian Arab and Jewish Leadership in the Mandate Period," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 6 (1977), pp. 113-121.

#### **September 2: The Positions of the Zionists**

- Horowitz, Dan, and Moshe Lissak. "Ideology and Politics in the Yishuv," *The Jerusalem Quarterly* (Winter 1977), pp. 12-26.

- Porath, Yehoshua. "Social Aspects of the Emergence of the Palestinian Arab National Movement," in Menachem Milson (ed.) *Society and Political Structure in the Arab World* (Jerusalem, Van Leer Foundation), 1973, pp. 93-144.

**Week 4: Could a Jewish State have been declared in 1939? What did the Palestinians know? Palestinian and Arab politics in the 1940s**

**Goal—develop the ability to analyze Zionist institutional development and national goals by the conclusions of the 1936-1939 revolt, the ways in which Palestinians and other Arab actors reacted, and the consequences associated with this tense period of the Mandate**

**September 5: No class for Labor Day!**

**September 7: Zionist Institution Building Amidst increased immigration**

- Shapira, Anita. *Israel: A History*. Boston: Brandeis UP, 2012. Pp. 119-155.

**September 9: Arab-Revolt and the 1939 White Paper**

- Khalaf, Issa. "The Reasons for the Disintegration of Palestinian Society with an Emphasis on the Persistence of Factionalism," Politics in Palestine (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), pp. 231-248.
- Sheffer, Gabriel. "Involvement of Arab States in Palestine Conflict and British Arab Relationship Before World War II," *Asian and African Studies* (1974), pp. 59-78.

**Week 5: The End of the Mandate, the 1947-49 War, Palestinians Refugees, Armistice Negotiations, Israeli Nation-Building, the Palestinian National Movement, and Absorption of Jews from Muslim Lands**

**\*We will discuss and schedule in-class presentations this week**

**Goal—shape a nuanced understanding of why/how intercommunal violence escalated in Fall 1947, the transition to regional war in May 1948, the historiography of the Refugee crisis, and how this period impacted the young state of Israel and the Palestinian national movement as Israel penned armistice agreements with her neighbors**

**September 12: The Lead up to the war**

- Cohen, Michael J. "Truman, the Holocaust, and the Establishment of the State of Israel," *The Jerusalem Quarterly* 23 (Spring 1982), pp. 79-94.

### **September 14: The 1947-49 War**

- Bickerton, Ian and Carla Klausner. *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 66-87
- Morris, Benny. "Origins of the Palestinian Refugee Problem," in Laurence J. Silberstein (ed.), *New Perspectives on Jewish Studies* (New York: New York University Press, 1991), pp. 42-56.

### **September 16: The Aftermath (Writing Assignment)**

- Shapira, Anita. "Conclusion: The Birth of the State," *Land and Power: The Zionist Resort to Force, 1881-1948* (Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 353-370; 414-415.
- Khalidi, Rashid. "The Palestinians and 1948: the Underlying Causes of Failure," in Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim (eds.), *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 12-36.

### **Week 6: Great Power Interests in the Middle East; the Cold War, the Suez War and the June 1967 War**

**Goal—build a clear framework to understand and analyze ways in which the A-I conflict (until the 1967 War) fit into regional, global political agendas and conflicts**

### **September 19: The global landscape post 1948**

- Safran, Nadav. "America's Israel Connection," *The Jerusalem Quarterly* (Summer 1977), pp. 3-30.
- Tal, David. "Israel's Road to the 1956 War," *The International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 28 (1996): 59-81.

### **September 21: The 1956 Suez Crisis**

- Rabinovich, Itamar. "The Suez-Sinai Campaign: The Regional Dimension," in S. I. Troen and M. Shemesh (eds.), *The Suez-Sinai Crisis, 1956: Retrospective and Reappraisal* (Columbia University Press), pp. 162-171.

- Bickerton, Ian and Carla Klausner. *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 87-105

### **September 23: June 1967 War**

- Yossi Goldstein, “The Six Day War: the war that no one wanted,” *Israel Affairs* 24, no. 5 (2018): 767-784.
- Bickerton, Ian and Carla Klausner. *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 118-129

### **Week 7: Attempted and Failed Diplomacy, 1967-1973, United Nations Resolution 242, and the Prelude to the 1973 War**

**Goal—construct a clear understanding of the diplomatic process that were initiated and pursued as well as missed opportunities amidst in the aftermath of 67 through the October 1973 War. This context is essential in pursuing any contemporary inquiry in A-I diplomacy and land disputes.**

### **September 27: Resolution 242**

- Nigel Ashton, “Searching for a Just and Lasting Peace? Anglo-American Relations and the Road to United Nations Security Council Resolution 242,” *International History Review* 38, no. 1 (2016): 24-44.
- Eugene V. Rostow, “The Drafting of Security Council Resolution 242: The Role of the Non-Regional Actors,” *New York University Journal of International Law and Politics* 25 (1992-1993): 489-503.

### **September 29: Palestinian National Evolution, Birth of Gush Emunim**

- Feige, Michael. *Settling in the Hearts Jewish Fundamentalism in the Occupied Territories*. Wayne State University Press, 2009. 1-20.

### **September 31: Sadat Take the Reigns**

- Ajami, Fouad. "The End of Pan-Arabism," *Foreign Affairs* (Winter 1978-1979), pp. 355-373.

### **Week 8: The October 1973 War—a catalyst of successful diplomacy? Sadat: the engine of a Diplomatic Option, Disengagement Agreements, Promises, and the Brookings Paper**

**Goal—unfold the complex circumstances Sadat faced as he assumed the presidency in 1970, his decision to initiate the 73 War and how it helped evolve the scaffolding for a new type of diplomatic process**

**October 3: October 1973 (Writing Assignment, discussion of final)**

- Bickerton, Ian and Carla Klausner. *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 130-138

**October 5: War for Peace**

- Galia Golan, “The Challenge of Peace,” in Joel Peters and Rob Geist Pinfeld (eds), *Understanding Israel: Political, Societal and Security Challenges* (London: Routledge, 2019), 199-216.
- Gerald M. Steinberg and Ziv Rubinovitz, *Menachem Begin and the Israel-Egypt Peace Process: Between Ideology and Political Realism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019).

**October 7: Path to Peace, recap for midterm**

- Gazit, Mordechai. “Egypt and Israel – Was There a Peace Opportunity Missed in 1971?” *Journal of Contemporary History* 32:1 (1997): 97-115.

**Week 9: Midterm! Movie....**

**October 10: Midterm**

**October 12: Movie (The Band’s Visit Pt 1)**

**October 14: Movie (The Band’s Visit Pt 2)**

**Week 10: The Carter Administration's regional Goals, the White House vs. Begin and Sadat, Camp David, the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli Treaty**

**Goal—unpack and analyze the circumstances that allowed for the 1979 agreement to come to flower and what that period can tell us about future diplomatic process between Israel and Arab states**

**October 17: Pre-Negotiations—what worked?**



- Cohen, S. P. and E. E. Azar. "From War to Peace: The Transition between Egypt and Israel." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 25:1 (1981): 87-114.

**October 19: The negotiations and the actors**

- Ken Stein, Heroic Diplomacy, Introduction
- Bickerton, Ian and Carla Klausner. *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 138-157

**October 21: The Deal—context and legacy**

- William B. Quandt, *Camp David: Peacemaking and Politics* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2016 (1986). Introduction

**Week 11: The 1980s—Lebanon War, First Intifada, Hamas' establishment, and the US–Israeli Relationship leading into the first Gulf War.**

**Goal—Analyze the 1982 Lebanon War and first intifada on the backdrop of broader local, regional, global political contexts**

**October 24: 1982**

- Elbaz, Sagi, and Daniel Bar-Tal. "Dissemination of Culture of Conflict in the Israeli Mass Media: The Wars in Lebanon as a Case Study." *The Communication Review*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2016, pp. 1–34.

**October 26: First Intifada**

- Bickerton, Ian and Carla Klausner. *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 158-168
- Salame, Ghassan. "Inter-Arab Politics: Return of Geography," in William B. Quandt (ed.), *The Middle East, Ten Years After Camp David* (1988), pp. 319-353.

**October 28: No Class—Fall break!**

**Week 12: The 1990s—The Gulf War, Bush 41, The Madrid Peace Conference, Clinton's election, Oslo I & II**

**Goal—Place the A-I conflict squarely in global and regional political developments, and establish a clear understanding of why/how the diplomacy of the 1990s unfolded in the ways it did**

**October 31: First Gulf War and Prelude to Madrid (Writing Assignment)**

- George J. Mitchell and Alon Sachar, *A Path to Peace: A Brief History of Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations and a Way Forward in the Middle East* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2016), chap. 4.
- Horowitz, Dan. “The Israeli Concept of National Security,” in A. Yaniv (ed.), *National Security and Democracy in Israel* (Boulder, 1993), pp. 11-53.

**November 2: Oslo I & II**

- Scott Lasensky, “Paying for Peace: The Oslo Process and the Limits of American Foreign Aid,” *Middle East Journal* 58, no. 2 (2004): 210-234.

**November 4: Camp David II**

- Bickerton, Ian and Carla Klausner. *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 181-207

**Week 13: The Second Intifada, 9/11/2001, The Arab Peace Initiative, Palestinian Elections, Gaza Withdrawal, Gilad Shalit, Lebanon II, 2007 Gaza War, and Transition from Bush II to Obama**

**Goal—develop a framework to analyze the impacts of Camp David II’s failure and subsequent Second Intifada on regional politics and the ways in which Obama’s approach to Middle East policy mimicked and diverged from Bush 43.**

**November 7: Diplomacy breaks down, The Second Intifada (Writing Assignment)**

- Ajami, Fouad. “The Century's Solitude,” *Foreign Affairs* 80:6 (November/December 2001), pp. 2-17.
- Raphael Cohen-Almagor, “The Failed Palestinian-Israeli Peace Process 1993-2011: An Israeli Perspective,” *Israel Affairs* 18, no. 4 (2012): 563-576.

**November 9: Operation defensive shield, Gaza Withdrawal, Annapolis**

- Jeremy Pressman, “Israeli Unilateralism and Israeli-Palestinian Relations, 2001-2006,” *International Studies Perspectives* 7, no. 4 (2006): 360-376.
- Lisa Thomas. “Reconstructions of ‘Reality’?” *Journalism Studies*, vol. 12, no. 4, 2011, pp. 522–538.

**Week 14: Hamas-Israel Conflict, decline (end?) of Israeli left & its impacts on diplomacy, Water, Gas, regional demography and the Arab Spring**

**Goal—construct a clear understanding of how the current “status quo” evolved, and, in many ways, became concretized in the late 2000’s - 2010s.**

**November 14: Imagining a two-state solution? Three state solution? Something else?**

- Susser, Asher, “The Two-State Solution: Getting from Here to There,” Foreign Policy Research Institute, October 2012, <http://www.fpri.org/articles/2012/10/two-state-solution-getting-here-there>
- Scheindlin, Dahlia, and Dov Waxman. “Confederalism: A Third Way for Israel–Palestine.” *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 39, no. 1, 2016, pp. 83–94.

**November 16: Gaza**

- Tabak, Lior, and Eli Avraham. “Country Image Repair Strategies during an Asymmetrical Conflict: An Analysis of the Gaza Conflict in 2014.” *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, vol. 12, no. 3, 2018, pp. 237–251.
- **Watch at home “Men on the Edge: Fishermen’s Diary”**

**November 18: The Arab Spring and The A-I Conflict**

- Menachem Klein, “An Arab Spring and an Israeli Winter?” *A History of Modern Israel*, 2013, pp. 405–420.

**November 21—In Class Presentations**

**Week 15: Presentations + Trump’s presidency, the Abraham Accords and US interests in the region**

**Goal—Place the 2020 Abraham Accords and new diplomatic norms squarely in the context of Gulf-US-Israel relations since Egyptian-Israeli Peace.**

**November 28: In Class Presentations**

**November 30: In Class Presentations**

**December 2: Regional Impacts, implications and the potential for a warm peace**

- Yossef, Amr. “The Regional Impact of the Abraham Accords.” *Modern War Report*, West Point, ser. 2, 2021.

**December 5—What may the future hold?**