

Israeli Politics/INTL4371
University of Georgia, Fall Semester 2023
Monday/Wednesday/Friday: 1:50-2:40PM
Room: Sanford Hall 0313

Dr. Eli Sperling

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Office Hours: Monday 10:00am-12:30PM, Zoom meetings can also be scheduled throughout the week, depending on my availability—email to inquire.

Office Location: Candler 312

Course Description:

This course explores the Israeli political system's history, social and cultural contexts, institutional characteristics and components, and numerous dilemmas. Amidst Israel's rapidly evolving domestic, regional and global political outlooks *and* upcoming national elections (during the semester!), this course seeks to offer an opportunity to critically engage with scholarly sources and Israeli political discourses. The goal of the semester is to offer students—regardless of prior course work on Israel or the Middle East—the context necessary to understand and analyze events in modern Israeli politics.

Grade Scheme

A: 93-100

A-: 90-92

B+: 87-89

B: 83-86

B-: 80-82

C+: 77-79

C: 73-76

C-: 70-72

D+: 67-69

D: 63-66

D-: 60-62

F: 00-59

Assignments:

Quizzes:

There will be 3-5 pop quizzes and about the readings, course content during the semester

Grade Composition

Quizzes/writing assignments: 10%

Group Presentation: 15%

Midterm: 20%

In class attendance and participation: 20%

Take home Final paper: 35%

Short writing assignments:

There will be two short group writing assignments.

Presentation:

Students in the course will be divided into groups during the first half of the semester. During the last two weeks of the semester, each group will give a 20 minute presentation—details will be discussed in the first weeks of the semester.

Participation:

Students should regularly attend class, having read all the required readings. They should be prepared to both pose and answer questions about the readings and engage in discussion on the broader subject matter.

Midterm Exam:

Midterm exam covering the topics in the course so far.

Final Paper

The final paper topic will relate to students' group assignments, the countries they study during the semester for their presentation. Further instructions about the final paper will be discussed in the second half of the semester.

Policies:**Academic Integrity**

Every student must agree to abide by UGA's academic honesty policy and procedures known as A Culture of Honesty and the University of Georgia Student Honor Code, which work together to define a climate of academic honesty and integrity at the university.

Special Needs

This course is guided by the assumption of dignity and respect for all persons in the classroom. My hope is to support diversity of learners and to provide a non-threatening environment. Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate reasonable accommodation based on your needs, contact me as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of classes), and make sure that you have contacted the Disability Resource Center: <http://drc.uga.edu>

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.

Required books:

Shapira, Anita. *Israel: A History*. Boston: Brandeis UP, 2012.

Week 1: Introduction

August 16: Syllabus overview, goals and expectations of course

August 18: What is the Israeli political system? How will we analyze its evolution and many moving parts?

- August 19: What is the Israeli political system? How will we analyze its evolution and many moving parts?
 - Edit Hazan, Reuven Y., and Gideon Rahat. "Israeli Party Politics." *Party Politics*, vol. 14, no. 6, 2008, pp. 659–661. (uploaded as PDF)
 - Caramani, Daniele. 2017. "Party Systems" —alternative text, uploaded as PDF

Week 2: Zionist political institutions in the Jewish Diaspora, Palestine pre-1948

August 21: What is Nationalism? Zionism? Political Zionism?

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso. 1983. Pp. 1-7, 37-47.
- Hertzberg, Arthur. *The Zionist Idea*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1997. 15-32.

August 23: Zionist immigration to Palestine, evolution of political institutions

- Mahler, Gregory S. *Politics and Government in Israel: The Maturation of a Modern State*. Rowman and Littlefield. 2004. pp. 13-42— https://www.google.com/books/edition/Politics_and_Government_in_Israel/vaUJ41X41hYC?hl=en&gbpv=1&printsec=frontcover

August 25: Labor, the Revisionists and the nucleus of the religious-right—bridging the past and the present

- Shapira, Anita. *Israel: A History*. Boston: Brandeis UP, 2012. Pp. 3-26.

Week 3: 1948 War—state seeking to state keeping

August 28: 1948 War—context and overview (Presentation groups assigned, first assignment—to be presented in class on Sept. 21)

- Shapira, Anita. *Israel: A History*. Boston: Brandeis UP, 2012. pp. 155-178

August 30: The Position of the Palestinian Israelis

- Peleg, Ilan, and Dov Waxman. *Israel's Palestinians: The Conflict Within*. Cambridge University Press, 2011. pp. 19-34.
— https://www.google.com/books/edition/Israel_s_Palestinians/oli3BK_mT5YC?hl=en&gbpv=1&printsec=frontcover
- Muslih, Muhammad Y. *The Origins of Palestinian Nationalism*. Columbia University Press, 1988. pp. 1-9.

September 1: The Labor establishment, *Mamlachtiut (statism)*

- Kook, Rebecca. “Changing Representations of National Identity and Political Legitimacy: Independence Day Celebrations in Israel, 1952–1998.” *National Identities*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2005, pp. 151–160.
- Zerubavel, Yael. “The ‘Mythological Sabra’ and Jewish Past: Trauma, Memory, and Contested Identities.” *Israel Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2002, pp. 115–144.

Week 4: Jews from Muslim Lands

September 4: No class for Labor Day!

September 6: Israel’s population doubles

- Stillman, Norman. *The Jews of Arab Lands: A History and Source Book*. Jewish Publication Society of America, 1976. pp. 328 – 333, 336-342.

- Shapira, Anita. *Israel: A History*. Boston: Brandeis UP, 2012. Pp. 222-270.

September 8: Demographic questions, Labor solutions

- Kohavi, Noya. "Why Was the 1965 Beatles Concert in Israel Really Canceled?" *Haaretz*, January 12, 2018, www.haaretz.com/1.5018895
- Chetrit, Sami Shalom. "Mizrahi Politics in Israel: Between Integration and Alternative." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, vol. 29, no. 4, 2000, pp. 51–65.
- Shalev, Ben. "The Hardest-Hitting Protest Song Ever Written in Israel." *Haaretz*, June 6, 2018, www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium.MAGAZINE-the-hardest-hitting-protest-song-ever-written-in-israel-1.6152410

Week 5: 1967 War

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

September 11: The Lead up to the war, ideational balancing in the region

- Bunch, Clea Lutz. "Strike at Samu: Jordan, Israel, the United States, and the Origins of the Six-Day War." *Diplomatic History*, 32:1 (2008): 55-76.

September 13: June 1967 War

- Shapira, Anita. *Israel: A History*. Boston: Brandeis UP, 2012. pp. 295–306
- Goldstein, Yossi. "The Six Day War: the war that no one wanted," *Israel Affairs*, 24:5 (August 2018): 767-784.

September 15: The Aftermath

- "The end of Nasserism: How the 1967 War opened new space for Islamism in the Arab world," Brookings, June 5, 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2017/06/05/the-end-of-nasserism-how-the-1967-war-opened-new-space-for-islamism-in-the-arab-world/>

Week 6: 1973 War, 1979 Peace with Egypt and a new era in Middle Eastern Politics

September 18: 1973 War and its aftermath

- Blanga, Yehuda. “‘The Russians Are Coming, the Russians Are Coming’: American Management of the Crisis Associated with Ending the October 1973 War.” *Middle Eastern Studies*, 49: 4 (2013): 563-580.
- Shapira, Anita. *Israel: A History*. Boston: Brandeis UP, 2012. pp. 326–339

September 20: A path to peace built out of war, the ascendancy of Likud

- Menshawy, Mustafa. “Turning ‘Defeat’ into ‘Victory:’ the Power of Discourse on the 1973 War in Egypt.” *Middle Eastern Studies*, 52: 6 (2016): 897-916.
- Shapira, Anita. *Israel: A History*. Boston: Brandeis UP, 2012. Pp. 340-356.

September 22: 1979 Egyptian-Israeli Peace and its legacy

- Kenneth W. Stein, “Evolving a Diplomatic Legacy from the October War: The US, Egyptian, and Israeli Triangle,” in Asaf Siniver (ed.), *The October 1973 War Politics, Diplomacy, and Legacy*, London: Hurst and Company, 2013, pp. 209-229.

Week 7: Attempted and Failed Diplomacy amidst the first intifada and Gulf War, Shas and a new Israeli political landscape

September 25: First Intifada, first Gulf War, US-Israel ties

- Shapira, Anita. *Israel: A History*. Boston: Brandeis UP, 2012. Pp. 391-421.

September 27: Madrid, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Bush 41

- Scott B Lasensky. “Friendly Restraint: US-Israel Relations During the Gulf Crisis of 1990-1991, Rubin Center, *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol 3, No. 2 (June 1999), pp. 24-35.

September 29: Oslo Accords, Netanyahu’s opposition, & Palestinian-Israeli outlooks

- Rekhess, Eli. “The Arabs of Israel After Oslo: Localization of the National Struggle.” *Israel Studies* 7:3 (2002): 1-44.

Week 8: The Death of Labor

October 2: Camp David II

- Rynhold, Jonathan. “Making Sense of Tragedy: Barak, the Israeli Left and the Oslo Peace Process.” *Israel Studies Forum* 19:1 (Fall 2003): 9-33.

October 4: A final swing to the right

- Aronoff, Myron J. “The Americanization of Israeli Politics: Political and Cultural Change.” *Israel Studies*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2000, pp. 92–127.

October 7: The setting of the stage for the Second Intifada, in-class recap for midterm

Week 9: Midterm! Movie....

October 9: Midterm

October 11: Movie (Men on the Edge: Fishermen's Diary Pt 1)

October 13: Movie (Men on the Edge: Fishermen's Diary Pt 2)

Week 10: Ongoing Israeli-Palestinian violence, Gulf and American interventions

October 16: The Intifada rages, Likud pursues hard power solutions (1-2 page paper assigned, due a week later before class begins—prompt will be sent after class)

- Shamir, Jacob, and Khalil Shiqaqi. *Palestinian and Israeli Public Opinion: The Public Imperative in the Second Intifada*. Indiana University Press, 2010. pp. 64-89.

October 18: The Arab Peace Initiative

- Kostiner, Joseph. “Saudi Arabia and the Arab–Israeli Peace Process: The Fluctuation of Regional Coordination.” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 36, no. 3, 2009, pp. 417–429., <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530190903338946>.

October 20: “The Status Quo”

- Zaha Hassan, Daniel Levy, Hallaamal Keir and Marwan Muasher, "Breaking the Israel-Palestine Status Quo," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 2021, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep31132>

Week 11: Gaza-Israel conflicts, overlap with Israeli demographic/electoral tensions

October 23: Withdrawal from Gaza, Hamas-PA violence

- Rynhold, Jonathan, and Dov Waxman. “Ideological Change and Israel's Disengagement from Gaza.” *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 123, no. 1, 2008, pp. 11–37.

October 25: The Wars, Iron Dome and the politics of political violence in the periphery

- Levy, Yagil. “The Gaza Fighting: Did Israel Shift Risk from Its Soldiers to Civilians?” *Middle East Policy*, vol. 24, no. 3, 2017, pp. 117–132.

October 27: No Class—Fall break!

Week 12: Why so many elections?

October 30: Elections, tomorrow! We will have an in class activity

- Please read—Ofer Kenig, "How do Israeli Parties Choose Their Candidates," Israel Democracy Institute, August 2022, <https://en.idi.org.il/articles/39528>
- For activity, read English-language (or Hebrew, Arabic if you can) press coverage from Israel about national elections—bring with you to class a bulleted summary of three articles, be ready to discuss your outlooks for elections based on those articles.

November 1: Today's electoral map in Israel

- Tamar Hermann, Or Anabi, Yaron Kaplan, "Israelis Say They Base Their Vote on Party's Economic Platform," Israel Democracy Institute, August 2022, <https://en.idi.org.il/articles/39510>
- Bareli, Avi. "Hierarchy, Representation, and Inclusion in a Reflective Democratic Culture: Conflicting Perspectives in Israel's Nascent Years." *Israel Studies* 22.1 (2017): 139-64.

November 3: Palestinian Israeli parties—watch episode of "Arab Labor"

- Cohen-Almagor, Raphael and Cohen-Almagor, Raphael, *Israel as an Ethnic Democracy: Palestinian Citizens and the Fight for Equal Rights* (August 6, 2021). Berkley Forum 2021, <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3900711>
- Nasreen Haddad Haj-Yahya, Muhammed Khalaily, Arik Rudnitzky, Ben Fargeon, "Statistical Report on Arab Society in Israel: 2021," Israel Democracy Institute, March 2022, <https://en.idi.org.il/articles/38540>

Week 13: The Abraham Accords, prospects for regional and global alliances

November 6: Saudi-Israel relations in a new era (1-2 page paper assigned, due a week later before class begins—prompt will be sent after class)

- Podeh, Elie. "Saudi Arabia and Israel: From Secret to Public Engagement, 1948–2018." *The Middle East Journal*, vol. 72, no. 4, 2018, pp. 563–586.
- Watch three-part *al-Arabiya* interview with Saudi Prince Bandar Bin-Sultan, "Prince Bandar bin Sultan on Israel, Palestine and Washington," *Al-Arabiya News*, October 5, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=edKZbu5OM1c> — to be discussed in class.

November 8: Bilateral deals, cultural diplomacy

- "Pitching Abraham's Tent: The Human Dimension of UAE-Israeli Normalization," <https://www.inss.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Pitching-Abrahams-Tent-The-Human-Dimension-of-UAE-Israeli-Normalization-An-Atlantic-Council-INSS-Emirati-Policy-Center-report-working-group-Chaired-by-Yoel-Guzansky.pdf>
- Aida Alami, "Bridging Time, Distance and Distrust, With Music," New York Times, March 26, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/26/world/middleeast/israel-singer-elkayam-morocco.html>

November 10: The regional politics of tech—defense and drought

- Evron, Yoram. "4IR Technologies in the Israel Defense Forces: Blurring Traditional Boundaries." *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 2020, pp. 1–22.
- Dany Zaken, "Israel, UAE to cooperate on clean hydroelectricity," *al-Monitor*, March 23, 2022, <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/03/israel-uae-cooperate-clean-hydroelectricity>

Week 14: Israel looks to the East

November 13: Israel-China

- Efron, Shifra, Howard J. Shatz, Arthur Chan, Emily Haskel, Lyle J. Morris, Andrew Scobell, *The Evolving Israel-China Relationship*, Rand 2019, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2641.html

November 15: Israel-Japan

- Brummer, Matthew and Eitan Oren, "Israel and Japan's Rising Sun Relations," *Foreign Affairs*, July 28, 2018. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/japan/2017-07-28/israel-and-japans-rising-sun-relations>
- Charles, Dani. Dani Charles, "Chutzpah meets Monozukuri: A Look at the Japanese-Israeli Cyber Relationship," *Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA*, September 24, 2019. <https://spfusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Chutzpah-meets-Monozukuri-FINAL-1.pdf>

November 17: Israeli-India

- India Defense News, "India, Israel sign cultural agreement to further strengthen people-to-people ties," *India Defense News*, August 22, 2020. www.indiandefensenews.in/2020/08/india-israel-sign-cultural-agreement-to.html
- Pethiyagoda, Kadira. "Is it time for India to play a role in Israeli-Palestinian peace?" *Brookings Institution*, February 22, 2018. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/02/22/is-it-time-for-india-to-play-a-role-in-israeli-palestinian-peace/>

Happy thanksgiving!

Week 15: Campaign video presentations +

November 27: In class presentations

November 29: In class presentations

December 1: In class presentations, group discussion of the project

Last day of class, December 4: What may the future hold for Israel's local, regional and global outlooks? Also, we will talk through the take home final, which be released after this session. We will prep for the final throughout the semester.