Dr. Eli Sperling
Email: eli.sperling@uga.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday, 11:00-1:00pm, can also schedule Zoom meetings throughout the week, depending on my availability
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Scheme</th>
<th>Grade Composition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A: 93-100</td>
<td>Quizzes/writing assignments: 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-: 90-92</td>
<td>Group Presentation: 15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+: 87-89</td>
<td>Midterm: 20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B: 83-86</td>
<td>In class attendance and participation: 20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-: 80-82</td>
<td>Take home Final paper: 35%</td>
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<td>C+: 77-79</td>
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<td>C: 73-76</td>
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<td>C-: 70-72</td>
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<td>D+: 67-69</td>
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<td>D: 63-66</td>
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<td>D-: 60-62</td>
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<td>F: 00-59</td>
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Assignments:
Quizzes:
There will be period quizzes and about the readings, course content during the semester.

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:


Week 1: Introduction

January 9: Syllabus overview, goals and expectations of course

January 11: 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?
  - Caramani, Daniele. 2017. “Party Systems” —alternative text, uploaded as PDF

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

January 16: What is Nationalism? Zionism? Political Zionism?


January 18: Zionist immigration to Palestine, evolution of political institutions and ideologies


**Week 3: 1948 War—state seeking to state keeping**

January 23: 1948 War, the Labor establishment, and *Mamlachtiut (statism)*


January 25: The Position of the Palestinian Israelis

  — [https://www.google.com/books/edition/Israel_s_Palestinians/oIi3BK_mT5YC?hl=en&gbpv=1&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Israel_s_Palestinians/oIi3BK_mT5YC?hl=en&gbpv=1&printsec=frontcover)

**Week 4: Jews from Muslim Lands**

January 30: Israel’s population doubles


February 1: Demographic questions, Labor solutions

Week 5: June 1967 War

February 6: The Lead up to the war, ideational balancing in the region


February 8: June 1967 War


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

February 13: 1973 War and its aftermath


February 15: A path to peace built out of war, the ascendency of Likud


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

February 20: Midterm!!

February 22: 1982 Lebanon War, First Intifada

**Week 8: War, Diplomacy, and the Death of Labor**

February 27: First Gulf War, Madrid, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Bush 41


February 29: Oslo Accords, Netanyahu’s opposition, Palestinian-Israeli outlooks, and Camp David II


**Spring Break!!**

**Week 9:**

March 12: Watch movie (Part 1)

March 14: Watch movie (Part 2)

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

March 19: The Second Intifada, Likud pursues hard power solutions to Israeli security threats


• Watch “Netanyahu At War,” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7W-xxpXzAC0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7W-xxpXzAC0) — come to class ready to discuss

March 21: “The Status Quo” and the Arab Peace Initiative


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

March 26: Withdrawal from Gaza, Hamas-PA violence


March 28: The Wars, Iron Dome and the politics of political violence in the periphery


**Week 12: Why so many elections?**

April 2: 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](https://en.idi.org.il/articles/39510)


April 4: No Class!!!

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

April 9: 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)


April 11: The regional politics of tech—defense and drought


**Week 14: Israel looks to the East**

April 16: Israel- China, Japan and India relations


April 18: What may the future hold for Israel’s local, regional, and global political outlooks?

**Week 15: Presentations!**

April 23: In class presentations

April 25: In class presentations—**Prompt for final paper will be posted at the close of class**