

# Multicultural Israel

Spring 2019

JS 365 \* ANT 325L \* MES 325

Unique #s:

39370\*31700\*40672

RLM 5.116

T-TH 12:30pm-2:00pm

**Dr. Amelia Rosenberg Weinreb**

Office hours by appointment  
amy.weinreb@austin.utexas.edu  
Phone: 512-232-2204

## **I. Course description**

Israel has the highest proportion of migrants of any country in the world. The notion of absorption—the social and economic integration of Jewish immigrants—has remained an explicit ideal since the founding of the modern state of Israel in 1948. Yet, absorption is also an ideological tool that often runs counter to the contemporary lived experience of citizenship, participation, nation building, minority rights, and the conflicting interests of today's multicultural publics. Taking these tensions as a starting point, this course explores the complex social fabric that comprises contemporary Israeli society, and that shapes Israeli identity, practice and politics. We will focus on the lived experience of Israel's increasingly diverse population. This includes populations associated with the majority: veteran Ashkenazim and Mizrahim; more recent Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Ethiopia, Latin America and France; religious communities such as Haredim and modern-Orthodox. It also includes ethnic and religious minorities such as Arab-Israelis/Palestinians, Bedouins, Christians, Muslims, Druze, and Black Hebrews, as well as laborers from all over the globe who migrate to Israel and refugees from Sudan and Eritrea. How fluid are boundaries between these groups? How different are their interests, tastes, desires and needs? How committed are various publics to a coherent nation-building project and to contemporary Zionism? To explore the breadth of multicultural Israel without sacrificing cultural specificity and theoretical depth, the course is organized into three integrated units: a) historical background of Israel and its populations; b) Israel's citizen-state relationships, identity and belonging, and c) ethnographic case studies of Israel-specific multicultural issues, and general contemporary multicultural theory.

*Note: This course carries a Global Cultures flag: Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.*

## II. Objectives

**Upon completion of the course, students will have developed the analytic skills to:**

- a) Articulate central themes of multiculturalism specific to the Israeli social and historical context, particularly in relation to the founding of the development of the modern state of Israel
- b) Place course themes of citizenship, participation, nation building, minority rights in the framework of anthropological and multicultural theory
- c) Converse, with historical and ethnographic sensitivity, about a variety of populations and socio-cultural groups in Israel
- d) Develop deeper familiarity with one such group living in Israel through extensive research
- e) Write an annotated bibliography independently

## III. Course Format

This course is designed to be a smaller-scale seminar for motivated students interested in learning about contemporary Israel, but does not presume any prior knowledge about the country or region. It is run as series of lively, fast-paced, interactive meetings in which students are encouraged to articulate and synthesize ideas with clarity, accuracy and sensitivity, and defend positions through evidence based on our common reading list. I will be asking for your feedback regularly so there is an open flow of communication and room for improvement during the semester. This is the rhythm of our weekly meetings:

*Tuesdays*-A small team of students, delegated in advance, will facilitate the discussion along with the instructor, raising questions, stimulating debate, and integrating ideas from the readings into the collective analysis of multicultural Israel. We have 10 student leadership days designated for Fall 2017.

*Thursdays*-An instructor-led discussion provides further the context and background for the readings, filling in gaps, and summarizing their key data, arguments and ideas in the reading.

## IV. Course Requirements

a) **Attendance and Participation (10%)**: Regular attendance is not only the key to your own success as a student in this course, but also for the quality of the course as a dynamic whole. Arriving late and leaving early disrupts class flow, so make every effort to arrive to class on time with your materials prepared and phones and computers, etc. off. This is a low-tech, highly interpersonal seminar.

b) **Three, two-page typed reading responses (10%)**: These can be unfettered reflections, reactions, critical commentaries, or overviews of the day's assigned reading(s). These responses are informal, but are required. They give students time to think through issues that interest them without the pressure of a letter-grade evaluation, but will be marked with a  $\sqrt{+}$ ,  $\sqrt{}$ , or  $\sqrt{-}$  based on their quality. **Important Note**: You may choose what three readings you wish to respond to over the course of the semester. However, to receive credit, **reading response papers must be via email the by gpm before we we discuss your selected reading, and cannot be made up at the end of the course**. Please label each response by both title of reading and number: response #1, response #2, response #3.

c) **Annotated Bibliography Projects (30%)**: Each student will select an Israeli population or sub-population that they would like to study in greater depth throughout the course, and

produce an annotated bibliography of the most relevant existing scholarly literature and multimedia material on that population (rubric posted on Canvas).

d) **2 tests (25 % and 25%)**: Cover core concepts, vocabulary, history, ethnographic examples, and theory in our texts. Each test will include a short-essay question that will encourage you to develop an idea in writing.

The tests will include the following question format and point values. The second test covers material from the pre-test, and includes maps.

15 multiple choice	(2 points each=30 points)
15 fill-in-the-blank	(2 points each=30 points)
5 short answer questions	(4 points each=25 points)
1 short essay	(1 essay =15 points)
<hr/>	
100 points	

Note on question content: One week prior to each test, I have students post two questions they would like to see appear on the test on Canvas, and often draw up to 80% of test content from student suggestions! These suggested questions also prove useful for students to study and prepare for tests. Both tests include 3 points worth of extra credit at the end that allow you to showcase careful reading for details or special attentiveness to class discussion.

#### **Summary of Course Requirements and Percentage of Final Grade at-a-glance:**

- a) Active, intellectually rigorous participation in seminar component: 10%
- b) 2-page reading response papers (3 total, each one 3.3% of your grade): 10%
- c) 2 in-class tests (25%, 25%): 50%
- d) Annotated bibliography assignment: 30%

#### **Extra Credit**

Students may earn up to 3 points of extra credit per semester towards their final grade. Rolling extra credit opportunities are announced during class, but not posted on Canvas.

#### **V. Grading**

Grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

- A** 94-100% Excellent grasp of subject matter; explains concepts clearly; provides relevant details and examples; draws clear and interesting connections, exceptionally original, coherent and well-organized; ideas clearly written/stated, outstanding classroom participation
- A-** 90-93% Very good grasp of subject matter; explains concepts clearly; provides relevant details and examples; draws clear connections; ideas clearly written/stated
- B+** 85-89% Good grasp of some elements above, others need work
- B** 83-84% Satisfactory grasp of some elements above
- B-** 80-82% Uneven, spotty grasp of the elements above
- C+** 75-79 % Limited grasp of the above
- C** 73-74% Poor grasp of the above
- C-** 70-72% Very poor grasp of the above

- D 60-69% Little evidence of grasp of material, having done readings, attended class, or completed assignments
- F 0-59% No evidence of having done readings, attended class, or completed assignments

*Complete written assignments on time:* I am committed to returning assignments to you promptly so you can benefit from my feedback while material is fresh in your mind. I do not grade papers or exams until I have the entire printed set in front of me. For these reasons, **I do not accept late assignments**. Bring a hard copy at the beginning of class on the day it is due. If you anticipate a problem, or have a history of deadline problems, meet with a consultant at the learning or writing center to help you plan ahead:

The UT Learning Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/>

Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

*Grading policy:* I am very happy to discuss how you may improve your work, and will read early drafts, but **I will not reconsider grades on papers or tests**. I grade all the papers and tests in a set at the same time to ensure that I am applying the same standards, and I make every effort to be fair.

*Plagiarism and copying:* Although this course is designed for creative, individual work and synthesis of ideas from various sources, any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit must be the student's own work. Should copying occur from another student, both the student who copied work and the student who gave material to be copied will both automatically receive a zero for the assignment. Penalty for violation of this Code can also be extended to include failure of the course and University disciplinary action.

University statements about plagiarism and the consequences of plagiarizing:

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/faculty/plagiarism/preventing.html>

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism/>

*Using office hours, getting help:* I check email regularly, and will usually reply to emails within 24 hours for basic questions, and no longer than three days for more complicated ones. My door is open from 11am-12pm on Thursdays. Ask for an appointment if you can't come in during my regular hours.

## **VI. University Notices and Policies**

### **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. In this course, that means we will all work to ensure that the discussion space is shared relatively equally among the participants, and to maintain an atmosphere of respect for each other's perspectives and arguments, especially when there are strong disagreements.

### **Students with disabilities**

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-

3986 (video phone). Please contact me as early in the semester as possible to let me know if you need anything to participate fully.

### Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, students are required to notify me of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will certainly give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

### VII. About the Readings

Through reading a common set of texts on the topic of multicultural Israel and taking advantage of ethnographic and historical material and news media and film, we familiarize ourselves with the breadth of Israel's diverse population, and consider the national socio-cultural landscape as a whole. We will also read a variety of multicultural theory that both lauds multiculturalism as an ideal, and disparages it as divisive for a liberal democracy.

**Note: A required course pack will be available for purchase. Details to follow**

**VII. Tentative Course Schedule:** *\*\*This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.*

### Key dates at-a-glance:

Plan ahead!

<b>Tues. 3/12</b>	<b>Test 1</b>
<b>Tues. 5/7</b>	<b>Test 2</b>
<b>Thu. 5/9</b>	<b>Annotated bibliography due</b>

Date	Main Topics, text(s)	Readings to complete before class	Evaluation, work to do at home
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>UNIT 1</b>  <b>INTRODUCTION: SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT</b>            What kinds of people live in Israel, and why do they live there?            What historical context do we need to be literate about contemporary Israeli society?            Why was the State of Israel founded and what implications does its foundation have?</p>			
T 1/22	Introduction to this class and its structure; Israel history, culture and society pre-test		
Th 1/24	A brief overview of Israel's populations Rubin Chapter 4: Society	Rubin pp. 121-150	
T 1/29	<b>*Student-led</b> Rubin, Chapter 4, Society, cont'd	Rubin pp. 151-188	
Th 1/31	<b>Mizrahim:</b> "The Politics of Defining Jews from Arab Countries"	Zamkenai pp. 1-26	

T 2/5	<b>*Student-led Feminism and Religion:</b> "The Women of the Wall: A Metaphor for National and Religious Identity"	Lahav pp. 50-70	
Th 2/7	<b>Refugees and Asylum Seekers:</b> "Ordered disorder: African asylum seekers in Israel and discursive challenges to an emerging refugee regime"	Paz pp. 1-21	
T 2/12	<b>*Student-led Ethiopian Israelis</b> "Israeli "Mixed Families" with Members of Ethiopian Origin: Encounters in the Public Space"	Benezer pp. 157-173	
Th 2/14	Create a population study guide In class exercise on group boundaries, boundary-crossing, and boundary-keeping		
T 2/19	Meet in PCL 2.370 at 12:30pm Library instruction day for annotated bibliographies		<b>Due:</b> Typed, hard copy paragraph describing the population you are interested in for your annotated bibliography, and why they are significant  <b>Due:</b> Population study guide
Th 2/21	<i>Historical Atlas of the Jewish People</i>	Barnavi pp. 1-40	Keep a running list of what you consider the most important historical details
T 2/26	<b>*Student-led</b> <i>Historical Atlas of the Jewish People</i>	Barnavi pp. 40-80.	
Th 2/28	<i>Israel is Real</i>	Cohen pp. 89-119	
T 3/5	<b>*Student-led</b> <i>Israel is Real</i>	Cohen pp. 120-157	
Th 3/7	In-class review for test		<b>Post on discussion board by gpm:</b> What would <b>you</b> like to see on test #1? Submit 2 sample questions
T 3/12			<b>Test #1</b>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>UNIT 2</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>CITIZEN-STATE RELATIONSHIPS, IDENTITY, AND BELONGING:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">What does it mean to be an Israeli citizen, or excluded from Israeli citizenship?  What is the relationship between citizenship, identity belonging and multiculturalism?  How does do of citizen-state relationships shape the Arab-Israeli Conflict?</p> <p>[Note: There is somewhat reduced reading load during this unit as students are completing annotated bibs]</p>			
Th 3/14	<i>The Dynamics of Multiple Citizenship</i>	Shafir and Peled pp. 1-34	
T 3/19	Spring Break		
Th 3/21	Spring Break		
T 3/26	<b>*Student-led</b> "Constitutional Incrementalism" <i>In Israel's Multicultural Challenge</i>	Sagi and Nachtomy pp. 1-25	
Th 3/28	The IDF "Service in the IDF and the Boundaries of Israel's Jewish Collective"	<i>Israel's Multicultural Challenge</i> pp. 180-199	
T 4/2	<b>*Student-led</b> Kibbutzim Transforming, Updates on Kibbutz life	Jews in Israel pp. 151-173	
Th 4/4	Can Israel be both Jewish and Democratic? Debates surrounding this question	Gavison pp. 1-4	
T 4/9	Watch: <i>City of Borders</i> (documentary on a gay club in Jerusalem)		
Th 4/11	<i>Israel/Palestine</i> (Dowty: 2008) The Jewish Story The Arab Story The first pass at peace	Dowty pp. ix-44 pp. 45-68 pp. 137-161	Watch: documentary clips provided on Canvas
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>UNIT 3</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>MULTICULTURAL CASE STUDIES AND MULTICULTURAL THEORY:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">What ethnographic examples help us understand Israel's multicultural challenges?  How applicable are theories of multicultural to Israel's national reality?  What can multiculturalism tell us nation building in the case of Israel, and more generally?</p>			
T 4/16	The Jewish Holidays as Platform for Multicultural Discourse of Identity	pp. 234-267	

	We Pay our Taxes and Serve in the Army (focus on the marginalization of the Israel Andalusian Orchestra)	pp. 287-305	
Th 4/18	Multiculturalism in the news		Bring in contemporary article featuring Israeli identities
T 4/23	Multiculturalism in the media		Bring in film clips/Youtube to share
Th 4/25	Multicultural theory, contemporary debates	Articles posted on Canvas	
T 4/30	In-class annotation workshop		<b>Post on discussion board by gpm:</b> What would <b>you</b> like to see on test #2? Submit 2 sample questions
Th 5/2	Optional Class: open office hours in classroom for support for annotated bibs or test content		
T 5/7			<b>Test #2</b>
Th 5/9	<b><i>*Party: Israeli holiday food and drink *</i></b> <b><i>Course evaluation</i></b>		<b>Annotated bibliographies due</b>

\*\*\*